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GENEALOGY

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To my friend J. Page  
shepherd with the author's  
best wishes.  
Joseph & Mildred Williams

Oct 24

1938.











JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

HIS FAMILY

*and*

RECOLLECTIONS

---

*By*

JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS

---

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1938

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THIS "LABOR OF LOVE" IS AFFECTION-  
ATELY DEDICATED TO MY CHILDREN

ROBERT S.,  
JOE V. JR.,  
GERTRUDE  
AND MARGARET.

1129680

*Goodbye - 15.00*

“Reverend James Tate Williams, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, was a man of noble intellect, of a sweet, Christian character, who lived a life of unusual breadth and scope in its usefulness, preaching a Gospel of Love, and teaching the youth of his generation in the useful and noble ways of this life. He literally died in the service of his people. His memory is fondly cherished by hundreds.” Excerpt from an article by the late Mr. Justice D. L. Lansden, published in a newspaper in 1912.



## FOREWORD

“If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings, and the widow weeps.” *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act V, Scene 2.



IT IS said the American people, generally speaking, manifest very little interest in their ancestry. It is frankly admitted that until May 17, 1929, I had made not the slightest effort either to acquire or preserve data about my forebears. At that time there lived at Sparta, Tennessee, my former home, a man named William Young, then more than ninety years of age. In common with others, I called him “Uncle Billie.” He had lived a useful life, and was held in the highest esteem.

I had never dreamed Uncle Billie bore the remotest relation to our family. I had known him from the time I was in school, in the early nineties. But on the date mentioned he wrote me a letter giving me considerable family history, and among

## FOREWORD

other things stated that our mothers were related and were descendants of Elias Wallace. He also detailed some interesting history of my great-grandfather James Williams.

This aroused my interest to such an extent that I immediately began an investigation of the Williams family history and, incidentally, the Wallace family, since my mother, Matilda Wallace, was a cousin of and bore the same name as the mother of Uncle Billie. This little volume is the outgrowth of the correspondence that followed between Uncle Billie and myself. I was saddened to learn soon afterwards that he was killed in an automobile accident.

My father, Rev. James Tate Williams, in his thirty-nine years, did as much as any other one man in his section after the Civil War towards educating the youth of that day; and in his service as a minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church he likewise had a notable record.

I have prepared this history of my father and our family largely for my children, and after it was written they insisted that I also write something of myself. I have acceded to their request and have denominated the incidents herein as my Recollections. In the generations to come my descendants will not be confronted with the fact, as I was, that none of their forebears took the time to record something about themselves and from whence they came.

## FOREWORD

So that one may be apprised of the location of various places herein after mentioned, I will state that the locale of my early childhood was White County, Middle Tennessee.

Hickory Valley, in that County, runs south from Milk Sick Mountain to the Caney Fork River, about six miles in length, and four to five miles in width, and to this Valley came the Williams' and Wallaces, my ancestors, more than a century ago.

Cumberland Institute was located on a mountain near Cherry Creek, about ten miles north of Sparta, the County seat of White County, and was founded in 1805.

White Seminary, before the Civil War, was as its name implies a school, and it was used also as a church. All the buildings have either been burned or destroyed by the elements.

Old Union was the first Presbyterian Church organized in White County. It is eight miles south of Sparta, and was located in sight of the Williams and Wallace homes in Hickory Valley.

Zion is eight miles west of Sparta, and previous to my father's moving there was long known as Zion Academy and Zion Church.

Information on the pages that follow has been gleaned through the aid of genealogists in Maryland and North Carolina; Librarians at Annapolis, Maryland, and Raleigh, North Carolina; the Census



## FOREWORD

Bureau and Veterans' Administration at Washington, and especially Miss Augusta Bradford, of the Chattanooga Public Library, and other sources. To each of these I am greatly indebted.

Also, I am indebted to James H. O'Connor, of Brownfield, Texas; J. H. Connor, Little Rock, Arkansas; Mrs. R. P. Officer, Sparta; Mrs. Adelaide DeVault, Johnson City, Tennessee; Mrs. S. B. LaRue, Greeneville, Tennessee; Judge Samuel C. Williams, the leading historian of Tennessee, of Johnson City; former Chancellor Hal H. Haynes, Bristol, Tennessee; the late E. L. Tyndale, Thomas Lee, and my cousin Emma Swafford Stacy, all of Sparta; Mrs. A. P. Alverson, Doyle, Tennessee; Foster V. Brown, who passed away in March, 1937; Mrs. Fannie Everett and Miss Zella Armstrong, of Chattanooga, the latter being a distinguished genealogist and Historian of Hamilton County, Tennessee.

I repeat that Uncle Billie Young was the primary inspiration for the undertaking.

JOE V. WILLIAMS

Chattanooga, Tennessee, 1938

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
FRONTISPIECE—JAMES TATE WILLIAMS	
FOREWORD . . . . .	v
PART I: FRANCIS WILLIAMS AND HIS DESCENDANTS	
I. FRANCIS WILLIAMS . . . . .	3
II. JAMES WILLIAMS . . . . .	11
III. JESSE SCOGGINS WILLIAMS . . . . .	18
IV. ELIZABETH TATE WILLIAMS . . . . .	22
PART II: ELIAS WALLACE AND HIS DESCENDANTS	
I. ELIAS WALLACE . . . . .	31
II. STEPHEN WALLACE . . . . .	35
III. WILLIAM WALLACE . . . . .	37
PART III: HISTORY OF REV. JAMES TATE WILLIAMS	
I. JAMES TATE WILLIAMS . . . . .	45
II. SCHOOL DAYS . . . . .	51
III. MANHOOD'S STATE . . . . .	57
IV. SOME RECOLLECTIONS . . . . .	64
V. DEATH VISITS HOME . . . . .	70
VI. MARRIES AGAIN . . . . .	73
VII. REMOVES TO ZION . . . . .	76

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
VIII. REMOVES TO TEXAS . . . . .	81
IX. NOTES FOR SERMONS . . . . .	87
X. FATAL ILLNESS . . . . .	94
XI. APPRAISEMENT BY REV. PAUL E. DORAN	96

## PART IV: RECOLLECTIONS OF JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS

I. CHILDHOOD DAYS . . . . .	109
II. INCIDENTS WHILE LIVING AT ZION . .	117
III. BACK TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE . .	122
BLAINE AND LOGAN . . . . .	124
THE MILL BOY . . . . .	126
IV. REMOVAL TO TEXAS . . . . .	130
V. STEPMOTHER AND FAMILY AND SCHOOL DAYS . . . . .	134
A CAT FIGHT AND A GOLD MEDAL . .	138
VI. LAW STUDENT AND EDITOR . . . . .	143
EDITOR FOR BRIEF TIME . . . . .	146
A HEATED JOINT DEBATE . . . . .	148
VII. CAME TO CHATTANOOGA—CHRONOLOGY 1894-1938 . . . . .	153
VIII. FACING TRIALS COMMON TO ALL YOUNG LAWYERS . . . . .	163
IX. HORIZON BRIGHTENS . . . . .	168
REFERENCES TO LOCAL BAR AND JUDI- CIARY . . . . .	170
OUR FEDERAL JUDICIARY . . . . .	177

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
MY BANKER FRIENDS . . . . .	179
CHURCH AFFILIATIONS . . . . .	180
X. OUR CHILDREN . . . . .	182
XI. WIFE'S FAMILY . . . . .	190
XII. SOME PREFERENCES . . . . .	195
XIII. PUBLICATIONS . . . . .	203
XIV. LOOKING DOWN MEMORY'S LANE . . . . .	207
TRIAL OF A NEW INVENTION . . . . .	209
SOME NECESSITIES IN ALL HOMES . . . . .	210
XV. SOME PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES . . . . .	212
UNEXPECTED EMPLOYMENT . . . . .	212
MARITAL ENTANGLEMENTS . . . . .	215
ATTEMPTS TO BLACKMAIL . . . . .	217
CHASING A DEAD SOLDIER'S FORTUNE . . . . .	219
XVI. LAST VISIT TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE . . . . .	223
XVII. MY RELIGION . . . . .	227
APPENDIX . . . . .	229
EXCERPTS FROM A COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS TO THE WEBB SCHOOL . . . . .	230
CHRONOLOGY OF FRANCIS WILLIAMS AND HIS DESCENDANTS . . . . .	246
CHRONOLOGY OF ELIAS WALLACE AND HIS DESCENDANTS . . . . .	249





## ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
James Tate Williams . . . . . <i>Frontispiece</i>	
Photostat of Oath of Allegiance of Francis Williams as a Colonel Soldier . . . . .	3
James Williams . . . . .	11
Jesse S. Williams and Elizabeth Tate Williams	18
Jonathan Whiteside . . . . .	22
Thankful Anderson Whiteside . . . . .	23
William and Mahala Felton Wallace . . . . .	36
Rutha Doyle Felton . . . . .	37
James Tate Williams, at Age of Five . . . . .	44
James Tate Williams and Matilda Wallace Williams and Sons Alonzo and Joseph Vin- cent . . . . .	45
Lilly Matilda Williams . . . . .	48
Jennie Shugart . . . . .	72
Mrs. Jennie Shugart Williams and Daughters Effie, Nannie and May . . . . .	73
Home in Hickory Valley Where the Author Was Born . . . . .	108
Home at Cumberland Institute <i>between</i>	108-109
Joseph Vincent Williams When 21 <i>between</i>	108-109
Joseph Vincent Williams in 1918 . . . . .	109

## ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
Joseph Vincent Williams in 1933 . . . . .	110
Mrs. Joseph Vincent Williams, at Age of One	
Year . . . . .	182
Mrs. Williams . . . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Mrs. Williams and Sons, Robert and Joe V.,	
Jr. . . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Joe V., Jr., Robert and Gertrude Williams	
. . . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Margaret Elizabeth Williams .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Margaret Elizabeth Williams .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Gertrude Williams Gaston and Peggy Anne	
. . . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Joe V. Williams, Jr. . . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Robert S. Williams . . . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Margaret Elaine Williams . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Our Grandchildren, Peggy Anne Gaston and	
Robert L. Williams . . . . .	<i>between</i> 182-183
Robert Scholze . . . . .	190
Mrs. Gertrude King Scholze .	<i>between</i> 190-191
Mrs. Nell S. Cole . . . . .	<i>between</i> 190-191

# PART I

FRANCIS WILLIAMS AND HIS DESCENDANTS







Hartford Co. Return of Wm. Smithson- 9

I The Subscribers do swear that I do not hold my  
Self bound to yield any allegiance or obedience to  
The King of great Britain his heirs or successors and  
That I will be true and faithful to the State of  
Maryland and will to the utmost of my power  
Support maintain and defend the freedom and  
Independency thereof and the Government as now  
Established against all open Enemies and all  
Secret and traitorous conspiracies and will to use my  
utmost Endeavours to disclose and make known  
to the Governor or some one of the Judges or  
Justices thereof all treasons or traitorous Conspiracies  
Attempts or Combination against this State  
or Government thereof which may become to my  
Knowledge So help me God.

Thomas Waters  
Francis Williams

APPROVED  
BY THE STATE OF  
MARYLAND

The above is a photostat of the oath of allegiance taken  
by Francis Williams and thirty-seven others on July 20,  
1776, as Colonial soldiers.

## CHAPTER I

FRANCIS WILLIAMS (1751-1833) \*



IN OCTOBER 9, 1832, Francis Williams, my great-great grandfather, who was then at Sparta, Tennessee, applied for a Revolutionary pension. (S. 3586) In his application he stated that he was born in Pennsylvania in January, 1751; that his father died while applicant was an infant, and that he, Francis, when quite young, removed to Harford County, Maryland.

Matt O'Connor, long county surveyor of White County, Tennessee, whose mother Mary Williams was the daughter of Francis Williams, stated in a letter to J. H. Connor, of Little Rock, Arkansas, dated March 19, 1900, that the parents of his grandfather Francis Williams came from England, and that Francis was of Scotch-Irish parentage.

The family record kept by my father simply states that Francis Williams married a Rebecca Trager, and they had a son James Williams (my great-grandfather), who was born in Harford County, Maryland,

\* A chronology of Francis Williams and descendants will be found in the appendix of this volume.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

in 1785, and in 1786 the family removed to Carter County, Tennessee. My investigation shows his home was in Washington County, near Jonesboro, Tennessee, and his farm was on the Watauga River and near the Carter County line.

I have procured from the Clerk of the Superior Court at Baltimore a certificate showing that Francis Williams and Rebecca Trager married at Baltimore October 12, 1779, the ceremony being performed by Reverend Worsley.

I might add that there is a tradition in the family that Francis Williams' bride was a French Huguenot, who came from France to Baltimore, and that the groom had sold a sufficient amount of his tobacco to pay the expenses of her voyage, and that he met her at the port and they were married.

Trager is an English name, and I doubt if Rebecca came from France. However, Trager is also Anglo-Norman, and it is possible the wife's maiden name was Tragetour, and on coming to America her name was Anglicized.

On July 20, 1776, Francis Williams was enrolled in the Colonial Army in Harford County, Maryland, by Bennett Bussey, and accepted by Thomas Bond, as shown in Vol. 18, Continental Archives of Maryland, p. 60. At the same time thirty-seven others were enlisted, the name of Francis Williams being

## FRANCIS WILLIAMS (1751-1833)

second on the list. I have procured a photostat of the oath of allegiance, as shown.

The army service of Francis Williams is given as follows:

First he was engaged with small parties protecting the property of citizens from attacks of the enemy on Chesapeake Bay. The length of this service is not stated. He then volunteered and served in Captain Bennett Bussey's Company in the Maryland troops, and marched from Baltimore to Annapolis, where he remained for some time, in readiness to help protect the citizens from an expected attack from the British, which did not occur.

He then returned to Baltimore; next by Philadelphia to Fort Washington. He was with General George Washington, at White Plains, N. Y., where three of his company were killed. They were near the stand of colors, although his Company was not actually engaged in the battle.

He then returned to Philadelphia, where he had charge of some of the sick men from Fort Lee for some weeks, and later was discharged.

The records in the Veterans' Administration show that the pension applied for by Francis Williams, from Sparta, where it is believed he was on a visit to his children James and Mary Connor, was allowed, and that he died March 1, 1833.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Former Justice Sam C. Williams, of Johnson City, has written me that Rowan County, North Carolina, had theoretical jurisdiction of the Washington District (now included in Tennessee); and that that territory was taken into North Carolina in 1776; and that Washington County was established by Act of the legislature of North Carolina in 1777. He also wrote that he thought no census of Washington County was taken in 1790. However, on page 175 of the North Carolina volume of that census I find the name Francis Williams in Rowan County, who had a wife, one son under 16 (evidently James, who was then five), three daughters, and two slaves.

This is proof that Rebecca Trager Williams was living in 1790.

In 1852 the estate of Francis Williams was administered in the County Court at Sparta. Why this delay of twenty years the Court records do not disclose. From this it appears he had children as follows:

MARY WILLIAMS, born in Maryland in 1783, married Archibald O'Connor;

JAMES WILLIAMS, born in Maryland, 1785; and  
FRANCIS WILLIAMS, JR., born in Tennessee, 1791.

As Tennessee was not established until 1796, the foregoing statement probably means that Francis Williams, Jr., was born in what is now Tennessee.

It is evident also that the administration statement



## FRANCIS WILLIAMS (1751-1833)

is not complete, because there were other children whose names are not mentioned.

Aunt Martha Brown, mother of the late Foster V. Brown, was well acquainted with James Williams, Sr., son of Francis Williams, and she told me in 1895 that Francis Williams had five sons, James, John, Ben, Jacob, and Francis, Jr., and two daughters, Mary and Sarah, and that the latter married Dr. Haynes.

According to records in Jonesboro, Sarah Williams married Dr. Jonathan G. Haynes on June 29, 1830. Dr. Haynes was a brother of David Haynes, the maternal grandfather of the late Senator Robert Love Taylor and his brother, the late Governor Alfred Taylor.

The census of 1850, for Washington County, Tennessee, shows there was a Francis Williams in that County born in Tennessee in 1812, married Matilda Stevens, to whom were born seven children. He died in 1887 and is buried at the Barnes Cemetery a few miles east of Jonesboro, near the Watauga River.

It has been suggested that this Francis Williams is a son of Francis Williams, born in 1791, and, therefore, a grandson of Francis Williams the Revolutionary soldier. He may have been the son of any one of the four sons, other than James, the eldest, the names of whose children we have.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Just when Francis Williams, the soldier, came to White County I have been unable to ascertain. Our family record shows his son James Williams, my great-grandfather, removed from Carter County to White County in 1807, but there is no mention that he was accompanied by any member of his family unless it was Ben, who is buried in the Williams' burial lot at White Seminary.

As above stated, I believe Francis Williams, Sr., came to White County in the early '30s to visit his son James and daughter Mary (Connor), leaving at least two of his children, Francis, Jr., and Sarah Williams Haynes, in East Tennessee.

The Washington County census for 1820, 1830, 1840, and 1850, show only one Francis Williams. Evidently this was Francis, Jr., because up to 1850 the census carried only the name of the head of each family and, of course, the name so published may have been Francis, Sr., up to 1830.

In 1861 there was issued to Francis Williams, at Jonesboro, a grant for 426 acres of land located on Watauga River, in Washington County, and it was stated in the grant, "being the lands on which he now resides." This point is near the Carter County line, and it is believed that point at one time was a part of Carter County.

The census of Carter County nor White County show the name Francis Williams.

## FRANCIS WILLIAMS (1751-1833)

Since James, the son of Francis Williams, the Revolutionary soldier, commenced purchasing tracts of land in 1818, which constituted his Parker Cove farm at White Seminary, I am very sure Francis is buried in the Williams' cemetery on that farm, but where his wife Rebecca is buried I have been unable to learn.

Mrs. Adelaide DeVault, of Johnson City, wrote that there is a Fields Williams living on the Watauga River at the point mentioned, and that he is the grandson of Francis and Matilda Stevens Williams, who had lived in that settlement. I am reasonably sure he is the great-great-grandson of Francis, the soldier.

Francis Williams was one of the pioneers in Tennessee. Since he had served in the Revolution he, like all others, had an opportunity to settle on and claim title to lands by paying a nominal sum. Each settler could enter and claim 640 acres and also an additional 100 acres for his wife and each of his children. Land then sold for forty shillings per hundred acres!

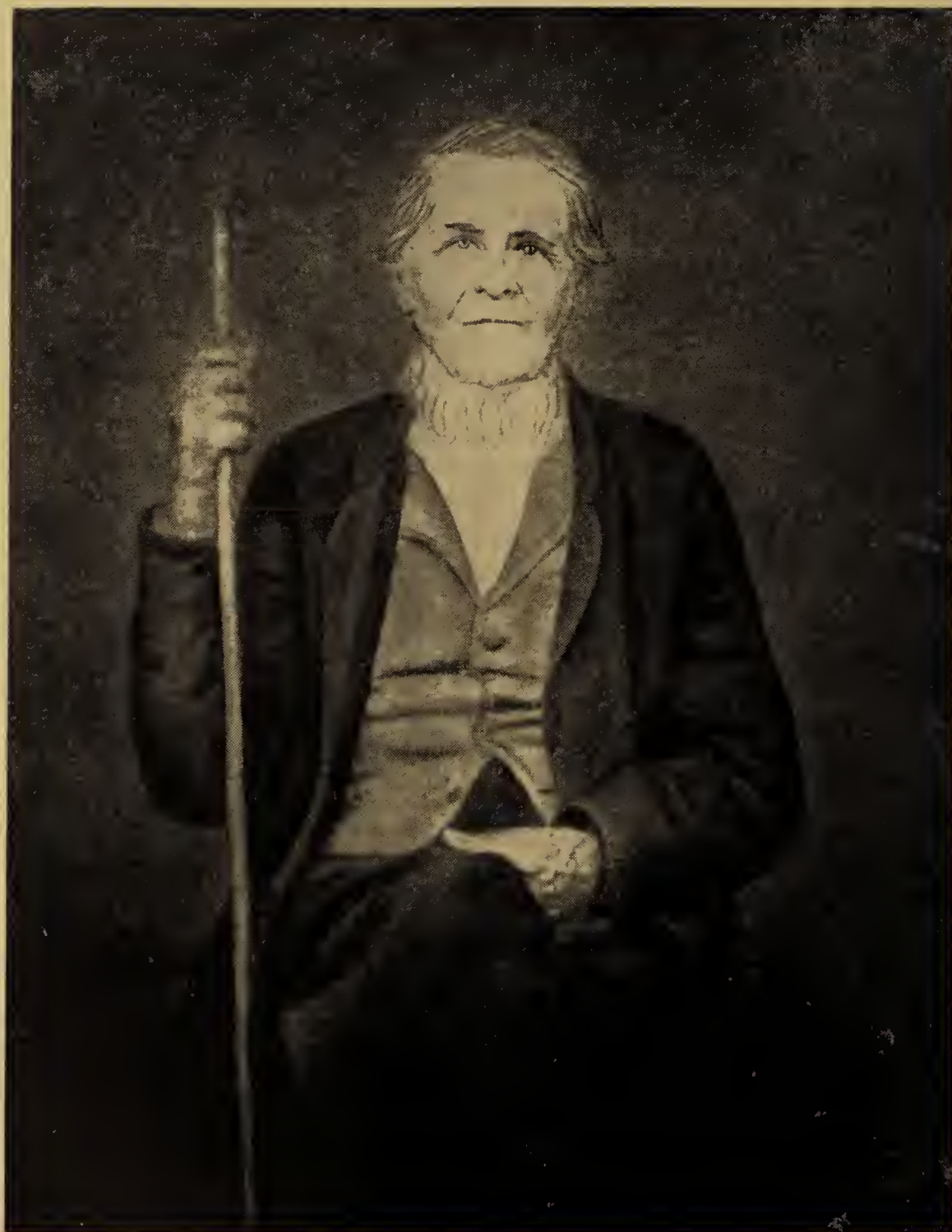
Ramsey's Annals of Tennessee, in describing these pioneers who settled in the Watauga territory, says most of them came without means, ". . . a poor man, with seldom more than a pack horse, on which the wife and infant were carried, with a few clothes and bed quilts, a skillet and a small sack of meal, was often

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

seen wending his way along the narrow mountain track, with a rifle upon his shoulder, the elder sons carrying an axe, a hoe, sometimes an auger and a saw, the elder daughters leading or carrying the smaller children. Without a dollar in his pocket when he arrived at the distant frontier, the emigrant at once became a large landholder. Such men laid the foundation of society and government in Tennessee."







JAMES WILLIAMS, SENIOR  
The Author's Great-grandfather

## CHAPTER II

JAMES WILLIAMS (1785-1876)



MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER James Williams, was born in Harford County, Maryland, in 1785, as heretofore stated. His sister Mary was also born there, in 1783, and so it was that these two infants came with their parents in 1786 to what was then the Washington District, which was then included in North Carolina, now either Carter or Washington County, Tennessee.

Tennessee became a state in 1796, and in the same year Carter County was formed. In 1830 a part of Washington County was taken over and included in Carter County.

As heretofore stated, James Williams came to White County in 1807, and just prior thereto and on January 22, 1805, he married Hannah Scoggins.

There were born to James and Hannah Scoggins Williams four sons: Rev. F. A. Williams, Jesse Scoggins Williams, David Williams, and Matthias Williams, and two daughters, Amarilla and Minerva, both of whom married men by the name of Arnold. Rev. F. A. Williams resided near White Seminary;

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

David was the father of Dr. Cain Williams, and Matthias Williams was the father of John Thomas Williams.

James Williams, Sr., so my father wrote in our family record, was known as James T. Williams, and it is believed the "T" was for Trager, his mother's surname.

James was a Whig in politics. He was six feet tall, weighed 170 pounds, had light hair and blue eyes. He died at the age of ninety-one years March 1, 1876, at the home of grandfather Jesse Scoggins Williams, in Hickory Valley. He was buried in his private burial lot which was reserved for the Williams family on his farm at White Seminary.

The records in the County Register's office at Sparta show James Williams began buying lands at this point in 1818, the date of the purchase of the last of the four tracts being 1828, and the farm was said to have contained originally more than 1400 acres.

Uncle Billie Young wrote me in 1929 that James Williams failed financially in 1850, because he had signed a large amount of security debts which he had to pay, and to do this he was forced to sell his farm then consisting of four hundred and twenty acres on October 14, 1850, when Samuel Parker became the purchaser.

Merritt Parker, who resides at Sparta, told me his



## JAMES WILLIAMS (1785-1876)

grandfather Samuel Parker had said after the deed was signed James Williams seemed deeply worried, and when asked the reason he replied that he did not mind giving up all he had to pay the debts of others, but he was grieved to be forced to sell the land on which his ancestors and members of his family were buried. Thereupon Mr. Parker said this could be avoided, and the deed was destroyed and a new one prepared in which the burial ground consisting of one acre was excluded therefrom and dedicated forever to the Williams family. This burial lot is about two hundred feet from the point where the White Seminary building was located.

In the same letter Uncle Billie Young wrote:

“Your great-grandfather Uncle Jimmie Williams once owned the fine farm three or four miles southwest of town, now known as the Parker Place. I understand that he lost it by going security for parties who went back on him. After that he lived with his two sons, Uncle Frank and Uncle Jesse, your Grandfather.

“My father came to Sparta from Jackson County, about a hundred years ago or more and lived here till 1855, when he bought a farm in the country known as the Terry Gillentine place below Simpson’s mills. My father did not move down to the farm for several years after buying it, but sent his negroes, some ten or twelve, down there, and got Uncle Jimmie Wil-



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

liams to go down to the farm and stay as Overseer, and Uncle Jimmie stayed there till my father moved down. Uncle Jimmie was a good man for the place, and got along with the folks all right.”

James H. O'Connor, of Brownfield, Texas, son of Matt O'Connor, a nephew of James Williams, Sr., on November 29, 1930, wrote the author:

“Yes, I am Matt O'Connor's oldest son. Will be 75 the 6th of February, 1931. I remember Uncle James Williams well, and ought to, as I rode behind him on a horse a good many times when I was quite small. He would stay with Uncle Frank for awhile, then want to visit father, then Uncle Jesse Williams, in Hickory Valley. Father would put him on the horse and me up behind. I would go with him to your grandfather Williams. They would then bring him to father's, and I would go with him to Uncle Frank's.

“I remember lots of things Uncle Jimmie told me about the first settling of White County. He helped to saw the lumber with what was called a whip-saw and built the first mill and dam and a covered bridge at Simpson's Mills, afterwards called Young's Mills. Uncle Jimmie told me he helped to clear up cane-brakes in White County for cultivation. He once owned a great cove farm of which Arthur Parker's family now own a part. He lost it by going on notes for others, and some of his children persuaded him

JAMES WILLIAMS (1785-1876)

to sell out and go to Texas. He didn't want to go but finally did, but never unloaded his wagon. After driving around and camping a few weeks he drove back to Tennessee. I've heard father tell about Uncle Jimmie having the wagon all loaded and ready to start to Texas. He happened to see an old iron wedge, picked it up and said, 'I'll take this—if I go.'

"All his security debts he had to pay broke him. He never was satisfied any more. He remembered distinctly all the experiences of his younger life. His last years were spent in worry; never quit worrying about losing his property. He told me he never had but two fist fights; was out in one hard rain; never drank liquor; never used tobacco, was temperate in all things, and I believe for these reasons he lived to be ninety-one years.

"He had two daughters, Minerva and Annie or Amarillo. I think both married Arnolds and went to Texas in the early days. I never could locate them. I've heard your father preach. I attended the meeting at Mt. Gilead when he and many others that are now gone professed."

My friend Judge Clem Jones of Athens, Tennessee, has stated to me that a "Whip-saw" was operated by two men by placing a log on two "horses" and the saw was pulled up by the man above the log, and then pulled down by the man working under the

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

level of the scaffolding. One can imagine it took a long time to cut a sufficient amount of timber for a dam and a mill and also the covered bridge.

The author remembers crossing this old-fashioned bridge many times when attending Doyle College.

General Simpson once operated this mill, and later these properties were owned by Douglas Young, the father of my friend Dr. W. B. Young, of Sparta and Nashville.

Mrs. A. P. Alverson, of Doyle, Tennessee, daughter of Matt O'Connor, says her father had told his children his uncle James Williams was the first one to cross this old covered bridge, and that he rode on a horse, and her father boasted that he had ridden behind his Uncle James on that occasion.

James Williams' sister, Mary and husband, Archibald Connor, lived just across Gum Spring Mountain from Parker's Cove.

This Connor farm is one of the finest in White County, and is near Boiling Pond, and was until recently owned by James Felton, who died in August, 1936. He was the son of Joeberry Felton, of Hickory Valley, the only brother of the author's Grandmother, Mahala Felton Wallace.

The census of 1850 discloses that Mary Williams Connor was then sixty-seven years of age, and the head of the family, and that she was born in Maryland in 1783.



## JAMES WILLIAMS (1785-1876)

Mrs. Alverson says her father's family was split up in party beliefs because of the Civil War, and her father, in 1865, added an "O" to his name, making it O'Connor, but others of the family who had removed to Arkansas failed to make the change and continued with the name Connor.

Archibald and Mary Williams Connor are buried in a private burial ground which is seen in front of the old Connor home, now known as the Felton farm. James Williams and his son Jesse Williams and family went to Honey Grove, Texas in 1852, and I have been told that Martha J., an infant daughter of grandfather Williams, died and was buried there in 1852, soon after which they all returned to the old home in Hickory Valley.

Cousin Foster Brown told me that a short time after General Lee surrendered at Appomattox his father, Major Joe Brown, who had served on the staff of General Bragg, returned to his family then living with grandfather Williams. Mr. Brown, a boy of thirteen, was at the time out in a field hoeing corn with James Williams, Sr., who was then eighty. Mr. Brown said he ran to the house and was made supremely happy because of his father's return, and also because he had brought the boy a pony.



### CHAPTER III

#### JESSE SCOGGINS WILLIAMS (1821-1883)



JESSE SCOGGINS WILLIAMS, son of James and Hannah Williams, was the author's paternal grandfather. Our family records disclose he was born at White Seminary January 1, 1821, married Elizabeth Whiteside Tate May 15, 1844, and that he died December 14, 1883, at Cumberland Institute and was buried at Union, in Hickory Valley.

In politics he was a Whig until 1861, and then a Democrat. He was a mechanic of rare skill and ability in working with wood and iron. He was a ruling Elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at Union for many years. In 1852 he with his father and family removed to Texas by wagon, stayed a short time, and returned to Tennessee.

They had ten children, and among others was my father James Tate Williams.

Josephine was the youngest daughter. She married William P. Glenn April 30, 1885, and they removed to Midlothian, Texas, in January, 1886, where they resided a few years and then removed to Childress, Texas. They purchased a farm near that place and



GRANDFATHER JESSE SCOGGINS WILLIAMS AND GRANDMOTHER ELIZABETH TATE  
WILLIAMS



## JESSE SCOGGINS WILLIAMS (1821-1883)

resided on it for many years and then removed to the town of Childress where Uncle William died May 31, 1926. Aunt Josie lived until March, 1934. They had no children.

I have very little information of the family of Hannah Scoggins, the mother of Grandfather Williams.

She had a brother, Jesse Scoggins, who was a brandy distiller, and who owned a farm and a grist mill on the north side of Caney Fork River in Hickory Valley. Jesse Scoggins gave this farm to his nephew grandfather Williams in consideration of his taking care of Jesse Scoggins and wife, Elizabeth, during their last days, the gift being evidenced by will dated November 16, 1838, probated at Sparta in August, 1865.

A little while after grandfather Williams married, in 1844, he came to this farm and cared for Jesse and Elizabeth Scoggins until they passed away, Jesse in August, 1865, and Elizabeth in 1859.

I have the original of a Captain's commission in the State Militia issued to Jesse Scoggins, dated at Knoxville, Tennessee, April 29, 1816, and signed by Governor Joseph McMinn. According to custom then prevailing, this evidences that Jesse Scoggins had seen some kind of military service.

Mrs. Annie Griffith, of Oliver Springs, Tennessee, daughter of Jabez G. Mitchell, told me recently that



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

when she was a small child she visited the Williams' home in Hickory Valley, and while playing upstairs there were two coffins standing on their ends, and the children in playing would hide in these coffins, and she was told that they were to be used by Jesse Scoggins and wife, Elizabeth, when they passed away.

Foster Brown was well acquainted with the Scoggins family. He informed me that Jesse Scoggins suffered from arthritis and became bent over and very much emaciated, but Elizabeth grew fat, and so when she was buried her coffin was too small.

Grandfather Williams, in 1879, purchased a farm on Cherry Creek, near Cumberland Institute, and the family resided there for two years and then came to Cumberland Institute where his youngest son Trent and grandfather and grandmother Williams passed away. However, their daughters Josie and Elizabeth continued to reside there until the former married, thus leaving but one child, Aunt Elizabeth, who then came to our home to live.

Grandfather Williams, as stated, was a genius in cabinet work, and his walnut and cherry bureaus, dining tables, book-cases, bedsteads, etc., were much admired and sought after. There are many pieces of furniture he made still in use in White County. Five years ago a Mr. Simpson whose father in 1845 operated a grist mill on the Calf Killer River above Sparta, stated to me his father had bought a combina-

JESSE SCOGGINS WILLIAMS (1821-1883)

tion china cabinet and wine closet made of cherry by grandfather Williams in 1845. Mr. Simpson said he had the cabinet and would sell it for \$50. and if I wanted it I could go to Ravenscroft, his former home, and get it. I purchased the piece, "sight unseen and for better or worse," and now have it in my home.

Grandfather Williams was a modest, quiet man. He was a very devout Christian, and when I was in his home he spent much of his time reading. He was small in stature, had dark curly hair, and was liked by all who knew him.

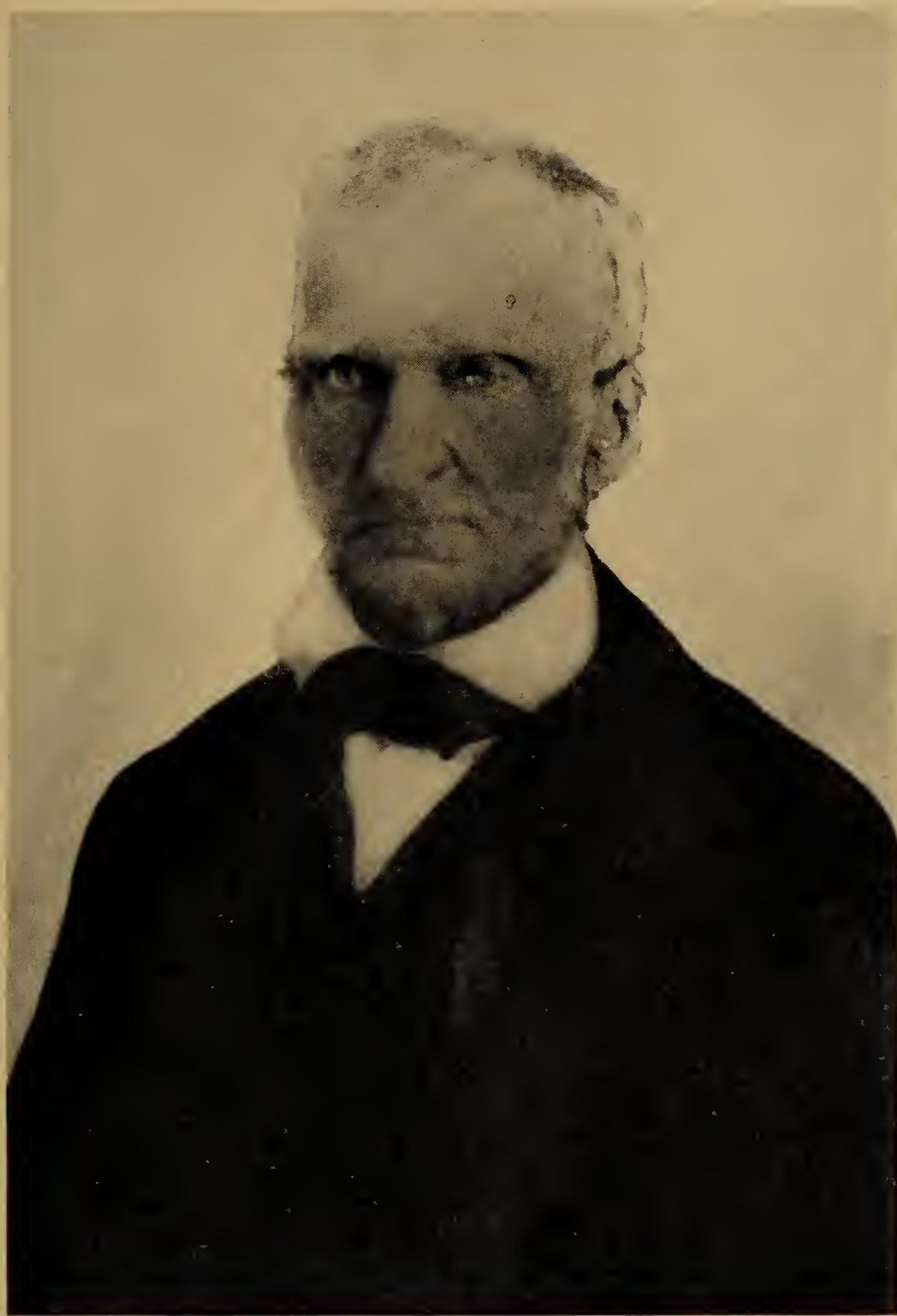
## CHAPTER IV

### ELIZABETH TATE WILLIAMS



MY FATHER'S mother, Elizabeth Whiteside Tate, was born and reared in Overton County, Tennessee. She was the daughter of Sallie Whiteside Tate and Vincent B. Tate. After her father's death, her mother married Jabez G. Mitchell, who resided at River Hill in Hickory Valley, and there were born to this marriage Martha Mitchell, who married Major Joe Brown, the parents of Foster V. Brown and Mrs Sallie Williamson, who until her death resided at Cedartown, Georgia. Mr. Mitchell was, before the Civil War, connected with the State Bank at Sparta, which was operated in a brick building, now a part of the Rhea House, the oldest hotel in that section.

My great grandmother, Sallie Whiteside Tate, was a sister of Col. James A. Whiteside, who with Col. V. K. Stephenson, of Nashville, projected the construction of the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad, now the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway. Col. Whiteside was one of the builders of Chattanooga, and he still has a number of granddaughters and grandsons here, among others being Mrs. Fannie



JONATHAN WHITESIDE  
The Author's Paternal Great-greatgrandfather





THANKFUL ANDERSON WHITESIDE  
The Author's Paternal Great-greatgrandmother

## ELIZABETH TATE WILLIAMS

Everett, and Mrs. Jack Betts, daughters of the late Col. A. M. Johnson and Thankful Whiteside Johnson, and Richard and Chester Watkins, sons of Col. Richard Watkins and Helen Whiteside Watkins.

Col. Johnson, in his history of the Johnson and Whiteside families published in 1893, gave the following history of the Whiteside family:

William Whiteside and Betsy Stockton, born in Ireland, emigrated to America prior to the Revolution, and after coming to this country they married and settled in Rutherford County, N. C., at a place still known as Whiteside's Settlement. They had thirteen children, nine sons and four daughters, among others being Robert, who married Betsy Coffey. They had a son Jonathan, who was born April 13, 1776, and died in October, 1860.

On July 19, 1796, Jonathan married Thankful Anderson, born February 7, 1775, who died September, 1859. They first resided at or near Danville, Kentucky, and had ten children, among others Sallie Hall Whiteside, born October 31, 1801, my great-grandmother, and James A. Whiteside, born September 1, 1803.

Sallie Hall Whiteside married Vincent B. Tate, of Overton County, Tennessee, and they had three children, Elizabeth, John, and Vincent B. Jr.

Colonel Johnson stated James A. Whiteside was born at Danville, and since his sister Sallie Hall was

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

born two years previously, it is assumed she was also born there. In referring to the children of William and Betsy Whiteside, Colonel Johnson at p. 143, said:

“The nine brothers and four brothers-in-law were all Whigs in the Revolutionary War, and fought for their country. Seven of the brothers and three brothers-in-law were in the battle of Kings Mountain.”

It is a tradition in our family that grandmother Williams' brother John Tate came on a visit to the home of Col. James A. Whiteside, at Chattanooga, in 1859, and while there borrowed a pistol and walked to the top of Cameron Hill, then bare of habitation, and shot himself and was dead when found. I asked Mrs. Helen Watkins, daughter of Col. Whiteside, just before her death, if this story were true, and she stated it was.

I might state here that my four children and myself joined the local chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and Sons of the American Revolution based on our relationship to Robert Whiteside, son of William and Betsy Whiteside, and also Major William Hall, of Surrey County, North Carolina, a member of the Provincial Congress, and who in 1785, settled in Sumner County, Tennessee, and who with his son Richard was killed by the Indians August 5, 1786.

Major William Hall married Thankful Doak who



## ELIZABETH TATE WILLIAMS

was an ancestor of grandmother Williams. Major Hall's son William Hall succeeded Sam Houston as Governor of Tennessee.

I mention this because it was only recently that I learned in gathering information for this volume that my great-greatgrandfather Francis Williams was a Revolutionary soldier, on whose record our applications for membership in the organizations named would have been granted.

### INDIANS KILL AND SCALP MAJOR HALL AND SON

The story of Major Hall and the Hall family is one of the most interesting in Tennessee history, and it shows the courage as well as the hardship of the pioneer period.

Major William Hall was born about 1735, in Virginia. He was the son of Richard Hall, whose family had removed to Surry County, North Carolina. William Hall was appointed Major of the county militia September 9, 1775, by the North Carolina Provincial Congress. In 1776 he was not only a member of the Provincial Congress from Surry County, but was also a member of the Committee of Safety.

In 1779 Major Hall sold his property in Surry County and moved to New River. He lived there something more than five years, when, as stated, he



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

removed to what is now Sumner County, Tennessee, then, however, in North Carolina.

Major Hall's son James was killed by Indians in Sumner County in 1785. On August 5, 1787, Major Hall was escorting his family to the Fort for safety as an Indian attack had been rumored. The family was attacked and Major Hall and his son Richard were killed, Major Hall being wounded in thirteen places, and both were scalped. William Hall, junior, and the two youngest children, Prudence and John, escaped by fighting desperately for their lives. Mrs. Hall was riding a large and powerful horse. When the attack began the horse became frightened and ran away, carrying her a mile before she was able to stop him. When she returned she found her husband and son dead. Two elder daughters, Mary and Sarah, were not with the family when the attack was made.

I have been unable to trace the ancestry of my greatgrandfather Vincent B. Tate further than the fact that he was reared in Overton County, Tennessee. The Tates are numerous in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and East Tennessee. All I know of Vincent Tate or his family is that he was the father of my maternal grandmother.

Grandmother Williams was a woman of more than ordinary ability. She was noted for her courage,

## ELIZABETH TATE WILLIAMS

physical and moral, and was beloved by all who knew her. In our family record my father wrote of her that she was five feet in height, weighed one hundred ten pounds, had light hair and blue eyes, and then paid her this tribute:

“She was a devoted and an affectionate mother; was kind to the poor and distressed, was a true Christian, and died a most triumphant death.

“Sleep on, dear Mother, until the Resurrection Morning, and may we, your children left behind, Meet you on the plains of eternal glory.”



## PART II

ELIAS WALLACE AND HIS DESCENDANTS





## CHAPTER I

ELIAS WALLACE \*



MY MATERNAL great-greatgrandfather, Elias Wallace, came from North Carolina to Hickory Valley about 1795. His wife's given name was Mary, but her surname I have been unable to ascertain. They had nine children, among them my greatgrandfather Stephen Wallace.

Elias Wallace's youngest son, John or Jack Wallace, was born in White County. The marriage license records at Sparta previous to 1838 cannot be found. I have been unable to ascertain the name of his first wife, but his second wife was Dicey F. White, whom he married February 24, 1847. The census of 1840 reported he had nine in family. His daughter Matilda married William Martin Young December 1, 1842, and they had children as follows: Uncle Billie Young, father of Ed Young, of Chattanooga; Charles C. Young, deceased, formerly a merchant at Sparta and the father of Hayden and Minnie Young

\* A chronology of Elias Wallace and descendants will be found in the appendix of this volume.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

and Mrs. James N. Cox, of Cookeville; and William Martin Young, Jr., of Sparta.

Other descendants of John Wallace are Mrs. Stella Holsapple Bohanon and son, Keith Bohanon, Attorney, also of Cookeville. Mrs. Bohanon is a well-known author and poetess. Some of her poems were published in 1937 Christmas Lyrics. Her mother Mrs. Alice White was the granddaughter of John White of Hickory Valley, who built the first cabin in White County. The Daughters of the American Revolution placed a marker at his grave in 1937.

Another son of Elias was Joseph Wallace who came to Hickory Valley with his parents Elias and Mary from North Carolina in 1795, but remained only a short time and went on and settled near Danville, Kentucky, so Uncle Billie Young advised me.

Joseph had a son Warner Wallace, born July 9, 1798, and who died in Travis County, Texas, January 5, 1870. Warner married Miriam McKee Lapsley at Danville February 17, 1829, to whom a son, Joseph Lapsley Wallace, was born July 11, 1833. The latter was the father of Mrs. Miriam A. Ferguson, who became Governor of Texas. Mrs. Ferguson now resides at Austin, Texas, and recently gave me this information.

I might add that the census of 1850 gave the name of John Wallace, aged 55 years, as having been born in Kentucky in 1795, and in that census he was

## ELIAS WALLACE

reported as living with the family of grandfather Wallace in Hickory Valley and this fact verifies my information that Joe Wallace, son of Elias, settled in Kentucky about 1795.

Elias Wallace's will was probated in the County Court at Sparta, in October 1821. In every part, including his signature, the name was spelled "Wallace," but in the order of probate it was spelled "Wallis."

My information is that Elias Wallace came from Yanceyville, Creswell County, North Carolina, on the borderline of Virginia. I am informed that early in the 19th Century it was known far and wide by Virginians and North Carolinians as a health resort.

The records there disclose that Elias Wallace bought and sold numerous tracts of land between 1780 and 1794. I examined one of the grants of land for 640 acres issued to Elias Wallace by the State of North Carolina October 3, 1787, and in the application dated March 16, 1779, the name was spelled "Wallace," but in the Grant it was spelled "Wallis," thus showing a dictionary of surnames was badly needed in those days.

My reasons for believing Elias Wallace came from Yanceyville are these: His name is not found on the tax roll there after 1794, and the last deed of conveyance of his properties was proven by witnesses who testified to his signature (he was then absent



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

from that State) in July, 1795, wherein he sold a tract for 150 pounds, and in addition the census of 1790 shows his sons-in-law Bryan and Browning and France bore similar names to others in the census of 1790 given as residents of the County of which Yanceyville is the County seat.

That Elias Wallace was considered a wealthy man in the early eighteen hundreds is shown by the fact that his children were known to have owned large and fertile farming lands in Hickory Valley.

Elias Wallace's wife Mary died in November 1837, and her son John Wallace was appointed her administrator. Just where Elias and Mary are buried I have been unable to ascertain.

## CHAPTER II

STEPHEN WALLACE (1785-1859)

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STEPHEN WALLACE, the great-grandfather of the author, was as stated, the son of Elias and Mary Wallace, and came from North Carolina to Hickory Valley about 1795.

Stephen married Susan York, but when and where they were married I have been unable to learn. According to the census of 1850, they were born in North Carolina, he in 1785 and she in 1787. Since his father Elias came to White County about 1795, when Stephen was ten and Susan eight years of age, it is presumed either that her parents also removed to Tennessee prior to their marriage, or that Stephen went back to North Carolina, when and where they were married.

White County was not formed until 1806, and was taken from Smith County. Prior to that time, and when Tennessee was originally organized in 1796, Sumner County included the territory now known as White County, and hence I have been unable to procure information as to marriages for the reason that all marriage records in White County prior to 1838, have been lost or destroyed.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Stephen and Susan Wallace had four children, the eldest of whom, William Wallace, was my grandfather. Just where Stephen and his wife are buried I have been unable to ascertain. The records in the County Register's office at Sparta show he was a large land owner.

He resided on the farm now known as the Charley Haston place, and as a child I remember quite well the residence which was just north of the present Haston home.



GRANDFATHER WILLIAM WALLACE AND GRANDMOTHER  
MAHALA FELTON WALLACE





THE AUTHOR'S GREAT-GRANDMOTHER RUTHA DOYLE FELTON

### CHAPTER III

WILLIAM WALLACE (1808-1876)



WILLIAM WALLACE, my maternal grandfather, son of Stephen and Susan Wallace, was born March 10, 1810.

I imagine he had about the usual education others had in that early period.

William served as administrator of the estate of his father Stephen Wallace, having been appointed in the County Court at Sparta October, 1859. The minute book showing the nature of the estate, and the administrator's final settlement, are missing and cannot be found. William dealt considerably in real estate and among other registered deeds of his purchases is one of record in the county register's office February 11, 1853, from Lucilius Bryan, Attorney in fact, to William and Laban Wallace, in which twelve tracts of land were conveyed. In December, 1868, he deeded to my mother, Matilda Wallace, just before she married, about 240 acres of land at the head of Hickory Valley.

William Wallace at the age of twenty-six married Mahala Felton, aged nineteen, the latter being the

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

daughter of John Felton and Rutha Doyle Felton. The latter was the daughter of Merrell Doyle, who owned the Doyle Cove farm in Hickory Valley, which was later owned by William Doyle, and now is owned by Walter Wallace.

John Felton was born in Maryland, June 11, 1796, and is believed to have resided at St. Mary's in that State. The war records of Maryland show a John Felton served as a soldier in the Revolution, and my information is he came with his son John Jr., and family about 1800 to Hickory Valley. John Jr. died September 8, 1841.

Mahala Felton was born September 18, 1817, on a farm adjoining the William Wallace farm. After the death of her father, her mother married James Heard December 11, 1842.

Grandmother Wallace's only brother, Joeberry Felton, who inherited and resided on the John Felton Farm, married Drucilla Mitchell, July 16, 1840. They had a number of children, among others William and James Felton.

The home of William and Mahala Wallace was near the Union Church where they and most of their children are buried. Their farm was considered one of the best in the Valley, was level and very fertile and productive. On it there was built a two-story frame residence which remained there until a few



WILLIAM WALLACE (1808-1876)

years ago. They had nine children, my Mother Matilda being the youngest daughter.

Their daughter, Martha Jane, first married James Swafford, of Pikeville. They had two daughters, the eldest being Mollie, who married Judge J. D. Goff, of Sparta; the other Emma, who was born in 1865, a few hours after her mother had witnessed the murder of her husband by the Federal bushwhackers at their home just above Pikeville. Emma married Coley G. Stacy of Sparta, to whom were born two daughters, Mollie May, who married Donald Fancher of Sparta, and the other Mattie Lou, who married Samuel Squires, of Carthage.

Aunt Martha Swafford, widow of James Swafford, married William D. Passons, and they had two sons, Charlie, who died several years ago, and Fred who is a partner in the mercantile business of C. G. Stacy & Company at Sparta. Uncle Billie Passons owned and operated the Central Hotel located on the public square at Sparta. Both he and his father served in the Confederate army.

Aunt Rutha Wallace another daughter, first married James Monroe Hill, and they had one child, Mattie, who married James Rasco, of Walling, where they now reside on a farm. After Mr. Hill's death on June 10, 1868, Aunt Rutha married James William Scott September 8, 1878, and they had two children,



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

the elder, Jennie, who married Burrell Moore, and Mae, who married Ernest Moore. The latter is Postmaster at Rock Island, Tennessee. Aunt Rutha, now nearly ninety years of age resides with her daughter Mae and Mr. Moore. Both Mr. Hill and Mr. Scott were Confederate soldiers, and Uncle Billie Scott, who once resided in Texas, served as a Texas Ranger, and is buried at the Concord Church about seven miles east of Chattanooga.

I remember seeing my grandfather Wallace only one time, and that was a short time before he passed away, while he was walking in his yard. It is said he became over-heated while harvesting grain, as result of which he became ill and died, in 1876.

Grandfather Wallace owned several large farms in Hickory Valley, and upon the marriage of each of his children he gave them a farm.

He was outstanding in his community, and was often designated administrator to wind up the estates of his neighbors. It is said he was often called upon for advice in business ventures.

Being a staunch Southerner and having two sons serving in the Confederate army—Callie and Simon—it was not surprising that all his livestock was carried off by the Federal army in 1864. He then had eleven slaves. The Emancipation Act having liberated them, his estate, of course, was considerably reduced.

## WILLIAM WALLACE (1808-1876)

Grandmother Wallace occupied the Wallace home place after grandfather Wallace's death until her death October 10, 1895. I visited her often, and shall ever remember her many kindnesses to me.

I remember great-grandmother Rutha Doyle Felton quite well, and remember especially when she was more than ninety years of age, she walked two miles through a deep snow one morning to grandmother Wallace's home, and sat down by the fire and smoked a clay pipe.

Grandfather Wallace owned a residence house on top of Cumberland Mountain, at Spencer, which his children used while attending school at Burritt College. His son Joe, for whom the author was named, was in school there in 1867, and was ready to graduate that term, when he was struck by lightning as he was entering his home and was killed.

Foster V. Brown, who was then living near the Wallace place, saw the boy fall. He was carried into the house, and the only mark or bruise found on his person was a discoloration on his thigh where a bunch of keys rested in his pocket.

The descendants of Elias and Mary Wallace are scattered, and no doubt each of the Southern and some of the Western States contain some of them. A number still reside in Hickory Valley, and other parts of White and adjacent counties.

All descendants of these pioneers have had their

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

tides of ebb and flow, just like the tides of an ocean, and as the late Bob Taylor once said, "As the world goes round and round, some go up and some go down." And so it has been with the Wallace Clan, but so far as I know not a single one has brought disgrace to the honored name of the first Wallace who chose Hickory Valley for his home.

## PART III

HISTORY OF REV. JAMES TATE WILLIAMS







JAMES TATE WILLIAMS  
From a daguerrotype taken when 5 years of age



JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND WIFE, MATILDA WALLACE WILLIAMS, AND SONS, ALONZO AND JOSEPH V  
From a tintype taken 1875



## CHAPTER I

### HISTORY OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS



JAMES TATE WILLIAMS was born on a farm located on the north bank of Caney Fork River, in Hickory Valley.

This Valley lies between two mountains running north from the river and at the head of the Valley is Milk Sick Mountain, the Valley being about six miles long and four to five miles wide. Its soil is fertile, some rolling, but most of it practically level.

The plateaus of the near mountains have from time immemorial produced an abundance of wild grass, and have for more than a century been utilized by the farmers of that section for grazing their cattle.

In the Valley there was virgin timber such as oaks and chestnuts which produced acorns and chestnuts and furnished an abundance of food for the raising of hogs, and thus it was in the pioneer days the farmers of that section became prosperous in the production of cattle and hogs. Fish were plentiful in the Caney Fork River, and until a few years ago there was a large quantity of wild game on the moun-



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

tains, such as deer, turkey, quail and fur bearing animals.

These conditions, together with the rugged beauty of the section, attracted to the Valley the first settlers, a great many of whom had served in the Revolution. They were not adventurers, but were men and women seeking sites for homes for themselves and their families.

Jesse Williams and Elizabeth Tate Williams, soon after their marriage, removed to the farm where James was born. It had a two-story frame residence building located on it and other substantial improvements. In front was a porch running the entire length of the residence, and nearby was a good orchard of apples, pears, quinces, peaches and a grape arbor. There was also a corn grist mill of the water-wheel type, now almost extinct.

In front and in sight of the home was Union Church, established in 1805, and at which the greater part of the people of the Valley worshiped. In this Church, built of logs, there was conducted a public school.

Close by the Williams' home was River Hill, the post office for that section; a store, blacksmith shop, and the residence of a country doctor. This point was the shopping and gathering center for those early pioneers and their descendants.

It was in this wholesome environment that James

## HISTORY OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

spent his boyhood. His parents, and in fact nearly every one in that community, were members of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and to Old Union Church came the leading ministers of that day to hold protracted meetings. Among others were Rev. Jesse Hickman, said to be a graduate of Princeton, and Rev. John Lansden, the grandfather of the late Chief Justice D. L. Lansden. I heard the late Foster V. Brown, who was reared in Hickory Valley, state that John Lansden had more native ability than any man he had ever known.

Young James worked on his father's farm, helped around the little mill, and when school was in session at Old Union he was always a student. When the preachers and visitors came to the Valley, the Williams' home was known to be open to them. Grandmother Williams had a wide reputation for hospitality, being an excellent cook, and ready to give a cordial greeting to those who came her way.

Foster V. Brown, one of the playmates and companions of my father, has told me numerous interesting stories of father and his family, and among others are these:

When Mr. Brown's father, Major Joe Brown, a Confederate officer, was wounded at Shiloh he was brought to Dr. Bolling Whiteside's home on Look-out Mountain for convalescence. Mr. Brown, his mother Aunt Martha, and his sister Sallie drove in a

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

spring wagon from Hickory Valley to Lookout Mountain to see Major Brown. On their return trip, when they reached the foot of the mountain, now St. Elmo, a Confederate soldier gave cousin Foster a pet coon which was carried to grandfather Williams' home where the Brown family was then living. It was noticed there was a scar on the coon's right front leg, as if it had been caught in a trap.

He and my father kept the coon in the garret of the house, and one day he went on a rampage. There were several tables in the upstairs hall covered with pears, apples, etc., being dried for winter use. The coon got into the drying fruit and scattered it over the room, as a result of which grandmother raised a storm, demanded that the coon be banished, and he was taken to the thicket on the river bank and given his liberty.

These youngsters the following winter were trapping on the river, and one morning went down and found in a trap the right front leg of a coon which, as is commonly the case, had gnawed off the leg in order to escape. On examining the severed leg the boys found a scar, and knowing it was their former pet they suffered much grief over the treatment they had given him.

Grandmother Williams told Mr. Brown a story of the love of a dog for his old home.





LILLY MATILDA WILLIAMS  
Daughter of James T. and Matilda Wallace Williams.





## HISTORY OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

In 1852, the Williams family removed to a point near Honey Grove, Texas, traveling by wagon. They took with them a cur dog they had raised. Soon the dog disappeared and inquiries were made of its whereabouts but to no avail. Information immediately went back to the Scoggins family, who had remained at the old home in Hickory Valley. A few weeks later, to the amazement of the Scoggins family, this dog, emaciated, foot-sore and weary, came upon the porch of the old home. The dog had crossed the Trinity and Red Rivers in Texas, the Arkansas, the Mississippi, the Tennessee, and various other rivers and streams, and had traveled nearly one thousand miles through new and uninhabited lands, and yet safely reached his old home.

In a few months the Williams family returned to Hickory Valley, and there was their faithful dog, waiting to greet them, his joy knowing no bounds.

I have never heard why the Williams family went to Texas except that my father's grandfather, James Williams, Sr., had lost all his property in 1850, as result of having to pay security debts, and it may be he wanted to get away. His son Jesse and family went along to please him.

Mr. Brown stated he and my father spent some of their leisure time when school was not in session fishing, and he said when they reached the age where

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

they thought they were men they became interested in courting the girls of the neighborhood.

My father did not have far to go when he called on my mother because the Wallace farm where she lived adjoined the Williams farm.

## CHAPTER II

### SCHOOL DAYS



EDUCATIONAL facilities in that day were limited.

At Old Union one could have the benefit of only a common school course.

In August, 1936, I paid a visit to Dr. Sam Denton, who resides in Buffalo Valley, a small village about thirty miles west of Cookeville. As far as I know, he is the only living student who went to school with my father in 1866 at Old Union. His relative, John S. Denton, was principal of that school, but he has long since passed on.

I was anxious to spend a few hours with Dr. Denton. A year or so previously the Nashville Sunday Banner had carried a brief history of him, in which it was stated that for usefulness to his fellow man he was one of the outstanding men of Tennessee. Although eighty-three years of age, I found he was in fine health, and night and day he drives his automobile to visit his patients. He stated my father was studious and took advantage of every opportunity to improve his mind.

James had the best education that was possible in



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

the community for one to have. He became a student at Burritt College, located on Cumberland Mountain, at Spencer, and just a short distance from Hickory Valley. Before and quite a while after the Civil War that institution was one of the leading colleges in the South, and many have been the men who came from its halls who made their mark in law, ministry, finance, and other walks of life.

My mother was also a student at Old Union, in 1866, so Dr. Denton advised me; and she also attended Burritt College, at which place grandfather Wallace owned a cottage where his children lived when in school there. That house is still standing.

In 1892 Wainwright Shockley, of Sparta, gave me a copy of an address Father delivered at Burritt College when he was twenty, the subject being "Time, the Great Consumer of all things." My sister Jemmie May (Mrs. James T. Quarles) retained it in part. I regret the closing part has been lost. The first of that address is as follows:

"Six thousand years ago time was born. When Jehovah stepped from His throne and commanded the sun, the moon, the stars, and all created things to fall from non-essential darkness, and to spring into beauty and grandeur, then moments began to be numbered. Let us pause for a moment and ask ourselves the question: 'Where is the once beautiful Garden of Eden?—the place where the first pair dwelt in

## SCHOOL DAYS

love, where flowers bloomed, birds sang, and the rivers uttered their sweet murmurs?' Alas, the great destroyer has visited it, and today the traveler can not find the spot where once the earthly paradise stood.

"Where are the walls of Babylon, composed of most durable rocks? Where is the grand city they encompassed, and the ten thousands of living beings that dwelt there? They too have been consumed by time. The walls no longer stand; the city is gone, and the inhabitants have long since passed off the stage of action.

"Where is the temple of Soloman—that temple where the majesty of God once delighted to dwell, which was surrounded by high towering mountains whose peaks covered with perpetual snow glittered in the sunbeams of heaven? That temple at whose altars a whole nation bowed in humble reverence. Where is it today? Gone, forever gone.

"If we should visit the cities of Athens and Sparta, where Lycurgus gave laws, and Pericles thundered his eloquence while a nation stood entranced, we would find that time has leveled them with the dust, and that the glory of Greece is no more.

"If we should go to Italy, with its vine-clad hills, and seek the glory of Rome with her warriors and orators, we would find that Old Time has been there with its destroying hand.

"Where are the mighty warriors that once led their conquering legions from conquest to victory, winning their thrones and crowns

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

through the blood of their fellow-men, and with their sable garments all dripping with warm gore declared themselves lords and kings, and with rods of iron oppressed their subjects and issued their proclamations as though their kingdoms were to stand forever?

“Go to their tombs and ask the question: The response comes back, ‘They, too, have fallen by the hand of time.’

“The bloody fields upon which they fought are now covered with golden harvest; the spots where the struggling squadrons met in deadly strife now bear great cities whose rising domes and lofty spires tower in the ether blue. They in time must crumble into dust by the hand of Time, and give room to new displays of man’s genius. The devastating march of Time is clearly seen on all terrestrial objects. There is not a nook or corner of the universe it does not visit. It throws its shaggy arms around everything and crys exultantly, ‘Thou art mine!’

“The scythe of Time is no respecter of persons; it visits alike the rich and the poor, the bond, the free. It goes to the palaces of opulence, and to the hovels of poverty, and writes decay there. It goes to the family circle, where the maiden girl with meek blue eyes and golden curls is the joy of every one, and whispers in her ear, ‘Time is, Time has been, but is to be with you no more.’ ”

Just how long father remained at Burritt College, or just what courses he completed I have been un-



## SCHOOL DAYS

able to learn. However, I do know that when he taught at Cumberland Institute there were classes in Greek and Latin and higher mathematics, and I must conclude he mastered them at Burritt College.

## WAR DAYS

Hickory Valley gave its full share in the support of the armies of the Confederacy, and no part of the South was more loyal to the Lost Cause than that community.

The Federal forces traversed the Valley more than once to reach and go from Chattanooga, and each time everything, such as cattle, horses, mules, sheep, and food stored for winter use, was carried away. In addition, Claiborn Beatty, a Federal guerrilla from Cumberland Mountain, made raids into the Valley to pillage and destroy and, if not given full sway, to maim and kill.

Grandfather Williams suffered from the raiders, as did the family of grandfather Wallace. I remember hearing grandmother Williams relate a visit of these outlaws to her home one night during the war days. They knocked on her door for admittance. She refused, and the ruffians rushed against the door, whereupon she yelled that she was on the inside with an axe in her hands and the first man who stuck his head inside her house would have



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

it cut off. Needless to state, the marauders quickly left the premises and returned no more.

Colonel Benjamin Harrison, afterwards President, brought his Indiana regiment through this community in the Valley, but I never heard that any depredations attended his visit.

## CHAPTER III

### MANHOOD'S STATE



MANIFESTLY, all the time my father was in school he was preparing for the ministry. He had made a profession of religion at Mount Gilead, located near Sparta, in 1866, and became a member of Union Church of which for many years his father had been and long remained one of the Ruling Elders.

Father was nineteen when he preached his first sermon. Foster V. Brown was present, and he has told me often that the speaker was well prepared, and his first sermon was eloquently delivered. He was still a student in school at that time, preparing not only for the ministry but for the profession of school teacher.

Father married Matilda Wallace December 8, 1868. He was then twenty-one years of age, and his bride was sixteen. His parents were not able to give him any financial aid, but his wife's father gave them a cove farm of more than two hundred acres at the head of Hickory Valley, to which place they soon moved. This farm was almost inaccessible at that time but at the present time it has a well-built

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

pike running through it, and is now owned by the family of the late Tandy L. Lewis.

The residence in 1870 consisted of two log pens with a porch between, known as a dog-alley. At one end of the porch there was a good well.

Brother Lon was born there September 21, 1869, and the author March 1, 1872.

In February, 1873, father, then twenty-six years of age, purchased and removed to Cumberland Institute, located on the top of a mountain near Cherry Creek, and about ten miles north of Sparta. His children and others called it "The Hill."

In his History of White County published by Reverend Monroe Seals in 1936, this institution was thus described on p. 35:

"The Charter for Cumberland Institute was granted in 1825. A man named Compton was then at its head. It was in existence before 1810. Cumberland Institute was one of two classical schools in the Cumberland Mountain region, the other being at Alpine, in Overton County. Some of the subjects taught were higher mathematics, Latin, Greek, and German. Cumberland Institute was a boarding school, and at one time is said to have had students from seven states. It was sponsored by the Presbytery, and one of the buildings on the campus was known as 'Preacher's Hall,' where candidates for the ministry lived. Perhaps the most famous head

## MANHOOD'S STATE

of this school was Rev. James T. Williams. He became nationally known after his death through students he had taught. Part of his fame rests on the fact that this Presbytery has now become famous as one of the Special Presbyteries under the direction of Dr. Warren H. Wilson. Williams was at one time head of Zion Academy. He died in Texas. After Williams left Cumberland Institute, French Crawford was at the head of the school for awhile, but it soon disbanded."

Father conducted that school from the Spring of 1873 to 1880, when he removed to Zion, located eight miles west of Sparta. He taught there four years and then returned to Cumberland Institute, where he taught during the year 1885, and then gave up teaching to devote all his time to the ministry.

In 1938 I can recall very few of his old students who still live. Among others are Mrs. R. P. Officer, Mrs. Tom Fancher, Thomas L. Lee, W. J. Ward and wife, Laura Roberts Ward, all of Sparta; Rev. R. H. Brown, Mrs. May Freeze Bilbry, Isaac Poston, Morgan Davis and Mrs. Davis, of Cookeville; Judge L. D. Bohanon and George Matthews, of Livingston; William B. Ray, president of the bank at Monterey; Hollis Johnson, of Monterey; Mrs. W. J. Breeding, wife of Dr. Breeding, of Nashville; William Baker of Cassville; James Sehorn, of Dickinson, Texas; Sam Bradley and wife, Sarah Weaver Bradley, of Porters-



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

ville, California, and Dr. Ridley Dyer, of Smithville, Tennessee. I am sure there are numerous others, but I cannot now recall their names.

One of my father's students, then Miss Nannie Hill, now Mrs. R. P. Officer, has written me as follows:

“My first recollection of your father, Rev. James T. Williams, was in the Fall of 1873. My father, John Hill, carried Sister Lou, brother Will and myself in a two-horse surrey to Cumberland Institute to enter school. Your father was principal of the school, assisted by Rev. Wm. P. Smith, minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

“Rev. Williams had all of the characteristics of a gentleman. He had a genial personality. In his activities he was alert, walked fast, was quick to see what was ‘going on’ on The Hill, and had the respect of his pupils. As a teacher he manifested a personal interest in each of his pupils, and as a minister of the Gospel he was untiring in the work for the Lord's cause. I remember distinctly, too, his favorite songs, namely, The Ninety and Nine; Pass me not, O Gentle Savior, Hear my humble cry; While on others thou art calling, Do not pass me by.’

“In 1874 he received Sister Lou and myself into the Cumberland Presbyterian church, baptized us at Cherry Creek, and in 1876 he officiated at my marriage to R. P. Officer. I appreciate the privilege of having been under

## MANHOOD'S STATE

his influence as teacher, and of his Gospel preaching. His influence for good is still felt through this section of Tennessee."

Mrs. Officer is correct in stating these were some of father's favorite songs. Others the writer recalls were, At The Cross; How Firm a Foundation; Shall we meet beyond the River; Jesus Lover of My Soul, Rock of Ages; and Nearer My God to Thee.

Dr. W. J. Breeding, of Nashville, who has long been connected with the State Health Department, wrote me recently as follows:

"I remember your father and saw him on a few occasions when I attended the closing exercises at Cumberland Institute.

"As a youngster I was impressed with his splendid personal appearance. He was tall and erect and a fine looking man. To hear him speak one was impressed with his strong character, sincerity and high ideals."

Dr. Breeding might have stated that his father had been educated at Cumberland Institute prior to the Civil War, and furthermore, the Doctor's chief interest in attending the closing exercises of that school was the fact that Miss Lula Johnson, who I remember as a very beautiful girl, was a student there, and that a few years later Dr. Breeding and Miss Johnson were married.

Two of the noted teachers at Cumberland Insti-

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

tute in the ante-bellum days were Curtis McDowell and his son LaFayette McDowell. One of the descendants of that family, Mrs. Florence McDowell Cotton, has written me there were at that place in those days a tannery, post office, physician, dentist, store, cabinet shop, weaving shop, and a tailor.

My father was appointed postmaster at Cumberland Institute in 1874, and was Senior Warden of the Cherry Creek Masonic Lodge. He was pastor also of the Cherry Creek Church during the years of his residence at the Institute.

The finest apple orchard I have ever known was at this place. There was also a large grape vineyard, a long row of "bee gums" well filled; plenty of chestnut, and mulberry trees, and a spring known far and wide which flowed out of the side of the mountain into a big hollowed out rock which would hold about twenty gallons of water. Ice was an unknown luxury in summer in that community in those days, but it was not needed since the cavern from which this spring flowed afforded a cooling system for milk, butter, etc. for all who chose to use it.

At our home at Cumberland Institute we had a large cellar, and every Fall it was filled with the finest apples. When carefully gathered and handled, we were able to keep them throughout the winter. Some of the names of the apples are still familiar to me, but today some of them are known by other

## MANHOOD'S STATE

names. For instance, what was then called the "Vandiver" apple is now known as "Stark's Delicious;" "Green Cranks," always green in color, are now called "Grimes' Golden." "Winesaps" and "Limbertwigs" are still so called, but I have never seen what we then called "Rusties" nor "Cracklings," or "Seedlings," all of which we had in abundance in that orchard.



## CHAPTER IV

### SOME RECOLLECTIONS



IN ADDITION to his ministerial work and conducting a school having an average of one hundred or more students, my father was County Superintendent of Public Instruction of White County during the year 1882.

I note from his papers I still have that he visited all the public schools in the thirteen civil districts of the County. Just what salary he received for such service I cannot state, but the records I have show the average salary of teachers in public schools at that period was \$25. a month.

Father was indeed a busy man. He was teaching school ten months of the year, and during all that time he was pastor of churches at Cookeville and other distant places. Sometimes on Saturdays he would ride horseback twenty or thirty miles to fill these engagements, and necessarily during the week he would not only keep up with his school duties but would have to prepare two sermons for Sunday. What a strenuous life!

I can see him now, working all day and far into

## SOME RECOLLECTIONS

the night, and then on Saturdays get on his horse to ride the "Circuit." He always had the best saddle horse that could be found, but he had to travel the typical country roads, sometimes muddy and always rough. He carried a cheap raincoat and a pair of saddle-bags—a piece of luggage indispensable in those days, now seemingly extinct, and as he would ride away he always seemed cheerful and happy.

I have his diary kept in old medical notebooks, and these show he would average about \$75 to \$100. a year for each church. People were poor. Most every one who could possibly do so, attended church in those days, on foot or horse, or by wagon. In our County in the eighties I can recall but three carriages, and not over a dozen buggies during that period. Father had a buggy, but it was rarely used because the roads were so rough.

In the seventies and eighties there were many young men who were known as "toughs" who attended school for fun and not for instruction. Four of this type were students at Cumberland Institute. One was Tom Cooper, the leader, and two were named Allred. The other is not named because he is still living, has a fine family, and no doubt he has long since repented of his boyish transgressions.

These young fellows refused to abide the rules of the school and boasted of their plan to break it up.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

They became very bold in their efforts and made threats to do bodily harm to the principal of the school which caused him to go armed.

The boys were finally expelled from school, but they refused to abide even this order, and responded with a note one afternoon that at eight o'clock that night they would come to father's house with a rope, and he had better be prepared for the worst.

Two young students learned of the threat and volunteered their services to stay with father. One was Dave Snodgrass, who afterwards removed to California and became president of a bank. The other was Judge L. D. Bohanon, who now resides at Livingston, Tennessee. Two more courageous or finer men never lived.

The author recalls vividly the scene at our house that night. Women and children were sent to grandfather Williams' home, on the school grounds. I can recall as a boy of seven that when we left there were guns, that is, rifles and pistols, resting on the bed in the front room; doors were thrown wide open, the windows raised, and the "reception committee" of three were ready to greet the incorrigibles. There was little sleep that night for the Williams family because it was known these were desperate men.

When we returned next morning we learned that promptly at eight o'clock on the night before these four rowdies marched to a point near our home, and



## SOME RECOLLECTIONS

on seeing the artillery and my father and the two students ready to meet force with force, the aggressors fired a gun in the air in front of the house and broke and ran. The morning sun found them on the way to their homes, and all was peace and quiet on "The Hill" ever after.

The names of Dave Snodgrass and L. D. Bohanon, naturally, have always been revered by the Williams family. As long as Dave Snodgrass lived he and the author corresponded, and the latter has often visited Lee Bohanon, who is and has long been County Judge of Overton County.

Father was compelled to resort to force, and if he had not the school would have been broken up.

Those were rough times. Only a few years had passed since the Civil War. In that section the best of Christian men were compelled to go armed. At Sparta every few months there was a murder, and that section became known for its fights. In the latter part of 1895 a Mr. Cox, a law-book salesman, came to the office of Charles D. Clark, who in a few weeks was to be named U. S. District Judge by President Cleveland, at Chattanooga. The author had his desk next to that of Judge Clark, and was at the office when Mr. Cox called. He stated he had just been over to Sparta, and began to describe the town as having a public square paved with small limestone rocks. He said he had learned that in



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

times past every rock had been smeared with blood and hair. Thereupon Judge Clark said he, Cox, was talking in front of a boy who had just come from that region. Mr. Cox laughed, and said he was just repeating a tradition.

In 1880 father was at Cherry Creek, holding prayer meeting, and while on his knees in the midst of prayer a big rock came thundering through the window near him but, fortunately, missed connecting with any one present.

The late James Trewitt, a distant relative of our family, told the author he was present, and when the rock landed my father suddenly stopped praying with a loud "Amen!" and several men in the audience yelled, "Let's get that scoundrel!" and quickly left church in pursuit of the villain, but he escaped. He was a well-known character, however, and thereafter he stayed away from that church. It was said he was killed a few years later in a fight with a neighbor.

Every summer protracted meetings were held in those days; that is, for several days at a time there was a sermon at eleven o'clock in the morning, then a dinner was spread on long tables in a grove near the church for all present, and another sermon in the afternoon and sometimes at night.

I remember when one of the neighbor boys attended one of these meetings. He was somewhat in

## SOME RECOLLECTIONS

his cups, and marched along the tables gathering pieces of fried chicken and other foods, exclaiming how hungry he was. Two old ladies in black bonnets looked him over across the improvised tables, and one said to the other, "I wonder who he is?" On hearing this inquiry the stranger came closer to them, and with one eye shut, his index finger extended and pointed towards the pair of inquirers said, "Madams, I am a wild man from Arkansas, and I don't give a damn who knows it!"

These stories are not meant as a reflection on the manhood of White County, but for the purpose of illustrating the times during which James T. Williams lived and worked. The fact is, there is today nowhere on this continent a finer type of citizenship, or a more God-fearing people than those of that section. Its people are the purest and the best of the Anglo-Saxon race, and these statements but evidence the progress they have made. That father played a large part in the upbuilding of that section, I think all will concede.

## CHAPTER V

### DEATH VISITS OUR HOME



WHILE living at Cumberland Institute there was born to my mother and father a third child, Adah, on March 8, 1874. She was frail from birth, and died July 9th following. On January 29, 1876, another daughter, Lillie Matilda, was born.

Mother was not in good health, and during that summer she was confined to her bed most of the time, suffering from consumption of the bowels. Her brother, Uncle Callie Wallace, told me while at my home in Chattanooga in 1920, when he came to attend the Confederate Reunion, that mother realized she was very ill, and in October, 1876, expressed a wish to return to her old home in Hickory Valley, to see if the change would be of any benefit.

Uncle Callie said he procured a spring wagon and went to our home and took mother to the Wallace home. She was carried on a cot, the distance being about twenty-one miles. She remained there in the care of her mother, but the change of scene wrought no change in her physical condition, and on Novem-



## DEATH VISITS OUR HOME

ber 14, 1876, she died and was buried in the Union graveyard, where her family is buried, and where Adah, Lillie and Lon, her children, have been laid to rest.

My only recollection of my mother is that she was small in stature, had dark hair and dark eyes. All who knew and have spoken of her said she was a beautiful woman.

Father wrote in our family record of my mother:

“Matilda was of medium size, black hair and eyes, was of an open countenance, a loving wife and a devoted mother; a Christian of deep piety, always met her friends with a pleasant smile.

“She sleeps in her grave awaiting the sound of the trumpet to call her sleeping dust to meet her Lord in the air.”

The only keepsakes we have of mother are two pieced quilts. For a long time we had her pink silk wedding dress, but in our rambling from home to home this was lost. The only living persons of whom I have any knowledge who attended the marriage of my father and mother is Jabez Mitchell, who is now nearly 90, and resides at Ada, Oklahoma, and Aunt Rutha Scott.

In April, 1933, while my daughter Gertrude was teaching expression and dramatics in the Amorilla Conservatory, at Amorilla, Texas, she visited Aunt



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Josie Williams Glenn, who related much history of the family. Among other things recounted in her letter to me at that time Gertrude wrote:

“Aunt Josie said she never would forget how lovely your mother looked in her salmon pink wedding dress at her marriage, and the desire of Aunt Josie, who tried to sit close to the bride all the time, but Aunt Josie’s mother had her move her little chair away. She spoke of the beautiful jet black shining hair she had, and of her dark, sparkling eyes.”

To me the saying “God pity the child who cannot remember his mother” is truly significant.

All who knew my mother and who have spoken to me of her described her as a patient, gentle, sweet-tempered woman, and all these tributes have reminded me of the epitaph on the monument to Sidney Lanier, the beloved poet of the South, and which when slightly changed applies to my mother:

Night slipped to dawn and pain merged into  
beauty

Bright grew the road her weary feet had trod;  
She gave her salutation to the morning  
And found herself before the face of God.



MISS JENNIE SHUGART



MRS. JENNIE SHUGART WILLIAMS AND DAUGHTERS, EFFIE,  
NANNIE AND MAY



## CHAPTER VI

### FATHER MARRIES AGAIN



FATHER'S school was constantly growing in numbers, and the calls to preach and hold protracted meetings were likewise increasing. He had three small children whose ages were seven, four, and ten months.

On December 11, 1877, he married Miss Jennie Shugart, who had been a student at Cumberland Institute. She was the daughter of W. H. and Nancy Brown Shugart, one of the outstanding families of that community. They had a cabin at Cumberland Institute known as the "Shugart Cabin," occupied at different periods by five Shugart children, Maggie, Jennie, Mary, Callie, and their brother William. Their father had been postmaster at the Institute during 1858.

My stepmother was indeed a helpmate to her husband. She had a brilliant mind, and was remarkably proficient in all mathematics. Just before she passed away in 1925, she told me this was one subject in which father felt his deficiency, and she believed he was first attracted to her because he knew her reputation for working every mathematical prob-



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

lem that was presented, and then she told me the following story:

In the summer of 1877, at the close of the school, there was erected the usual arbor for use in the closing exercises. Rev. William P. Smith was her teacher in geometry, and since there were many scholars, visitors and teachers present he announced to the audience that he was calling Jennie Shugart to the stage, and if any one present would give her a mathematical problem he assured all that she would quickly solve it. She said this made her nervous, but having a strain of Irish-Dutch blood in her veins, she walked to the blackboard, whereupon a tall stranger, scholarly in appearance, arose and gave her the toughest problem of which she had ever heard or read. She said for a moment she was bewildered, but getting her balance, in a flash she wrote the answer amidst the applause of the gathering, and to her joy no one else asked a question, and she happily took her seat.

There were born to father and his second wife, five children: Effie, Jesse Ernest, Mamie, Nannie and Jemmie May. All have passed on except the latter, who married James T. Quarles, of Gainesboro, Tennessee. He holds the rank of Major in the Officers' Reserve Corps, having served with distinction in the Spanish-American and World Wars.

My stepmother survived father thirty-nine years,



MRS. JAMES T. QUARLES, DAUGHTER OF JAMES TATE  
WILLIAMS AND JENNIE SHUGART WILLIAMS



## FATHER MARRIES AGAIN

and passed away at Cookeville, at the home of her daughter Nannie (Mrs. Ed Bullock) October 24, 1925. In many ways she was one of the most remarkable women I have ever known.

As heretofore stated, father removed to Zion in February, 1880, where he had charge of Zion Academy. That was in what is called the "flat" lands, but it was a community famed for its fine citizenship.



## CHAPTER VII

### IN OUR NEW HOME AT ZION



THE people in that community purchased a field near the church building and erected on it a residence, smokehouse and barn, all of logs, and provided a garden and well for the Williams family and the use of the students. Nearby they erected several frame and log cabins for the students, all on the same plan as existed at Cumberland Institute.

From the first there were as many students as could be accommodated. Zion was more accessible than the school had been at the Institute, and the roads leading to and from Zion were of better type than those in the Cherry Creek section.

It was then considered one of the most progressive communities of the County. It seemed every family had young men and women who were anxious for an education, and it may be said there was hardly a family in the section which was not represented at the school during the four years my father conducted a school at that place.

As Zion Academy it was well known in that part of the country, and every surrounding county had

## IN OUR NEW HOME AT ZION

students in the school. Father was pastor of Zion Church, and preached there regularly during his stay.

To me my father appears to have been a perfect man. The nearest I ever heard him speak in uncomplimentary terms of any one was in 1883, while we were residing at Zion.

A neighbor, Mr. Smith, rode up to the house one day and called my father to the gate. I went along, and I remember Smith stated he was in dire need of two dollars and a half, and asked my father for a loan, assuring him that "on next Saturday" the loan, if made, would surely be repaid. I saw my father hand him a two dollar and a half gold piece.

Smith was not seen about our house after that, and in a few weeks I heard my stepmother ask father if Smith had ever paid back the money, to which father calmly replied, "No, 'next Saturday' has never come."

And I am sure Smith went to his Maker—he was then about fifty—knowing he had violated his promise.

During our residence at Zion my stepmother became ill and had hemorrhages which continued for at least two years. Naturally, she grew weak, so much so that it was believed she had not long to live.

My father evidently concluded she would improve if taken to a higher altitude, and I remember he was

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

worried as to whether he should return to Cumberland Institute, or just what should be done in an effort to improve her health.

The student body was increasing as the terms came and went. The people at Zion had been very good to my father and family, and he knew there would be a protest made if he announced that he was leaving. Finally, however, he made up his mind to go back to Cumberland Institute, and decided very suddenly that due to the ill-health of his wife he would leave at the close of school in the Fall of 1883. Several wagons were procured and early one morning the loading of our furniture was begun. Well do I remember that day.

A near-neighbor, Esquire Joe Glenn, one of the prominent farmers of the community, heard we were leaving, and sounded the alarm, and he and others came to our home to protest our moving away. Reasons were given why we should remain, but my father replied he had carefully considered all the reasons urged, but he felt it was his duty to move back to our former home.

By that time everything we had was on the wagons, and as the minutes passed our neighbors continued to arrive to join in the protest. Finally Esquire Glenn spoke to the crowd and asked all to kneel, that he was going to offer a prayer. At his suggestion the people fell to their knees on the ground and the



## IN OUR NEW HOME AT ZION

old man delivered one of the most fervent prayers I have ever heard, asking the Lord to show the way whereby Brother Williams could remain in the community. Esquire Glenn was known for his deep piety and sincerity, and was a leader in his community.

Glenn's prayer was answered spontaneously. When the audience rose to its feet my father stepped forward and announced that he had changed his mind, and had decided not to move. He directed that the wagons be unloaded.

That prayer was really a sermon, and it and what followed deeply affected all those present, including the author, and from that moment to this time I have been a firm believer in the power of prayer.

We remained another year at Zion, but since death had taken two children, Jesse Ernest and Mamie, during our stay there, together with the continued illness of his wife, my father was caused to move back to the mountain in December, 1884, where he again taught school for a year. He had a full school again at Cumberland Institute.

That father had then made up his mind to make this his permanent home is borne out by the fact that he soon purchased a farm on Cherry Creek, and arrangements were immediately made for his two sons to operate the farm, and this we did during the summer of 1885.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Brother Lon was then sixteen years of age, and was a quiet, happy boy. He did not have the mischievous proclivities of his younger brother. He went on a visit to a neighbor in the Fall of 1885, after the crops were harvested, and since he did not return inquiry was made and it was learned he had been persuaded to go to Texas with the Davidson family, some of whom had been my father's students. They had gone by wagons, and the first definite information we had of Lon was about five or six weeks later, when we learned he had landed at Midlothian, just South of Dallas.

Naturally, my father was deeply worried because his eldest son had left home and had gone so far away, and in this anxiety my stepmother shared. It is my belief that this event was the cause of my father deciding to remove to Texas. I may be mistaken in this, and it is possible his decision to go was partially based on the belief that the change would be beneficial to his wife's health, and would also lessen his labors.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TO THE LONE STAR STATE



IN EARLY January, 1886, accompanied by Aunt Josie Glenn and husband, William P. Glenn, we left for Texas and went to a point midway between Cedar Hill and Midlothian, which is twenty-five miles south of Dallas.

My most vivid memory of our leaving Tennessee was that I could not take my dog. I also remember we carried a big basket of provisions sufficient for our food on the trip. We children had never before been on a train, and during the day sat in awe, watching the telegraph poles and hamlets and cities "go by." At night as we passed through the swamps of Arkansas we were entertained by the constant singing of the millions of frogs.

We arrived at Dallas one evening and stayed at the St. James Hotel. In 1934 I tried but could not locate the building. A few weeks afterwards some friend at Dallas sent me the Dallas News and it carried a picture of this hotel—a two-story structure—which I had remembered as a skyscraper.

We were met at the train at Cedar Hill by Tommy

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Glenn, who had married Mary Lee, both former students of father, and my brother Lon.

We were greeted by one of the Texas "Northers" the moment we arrived. Father was overjoyed to see his prodigal son, who stood shivering on the depot platform. Seeing he was improperly clothed, the first thing father did was to take Lon to a clothing store and purchase a full outfit of warm clothing for him.

For a few days we were guests of Tommy Glenn and his good wife. At Cumberland Institute she, then Mary Lee, and her family had been our nearest neighbors. Her brother Tom had been my childhood pal. Needless to say, they did their best to make our stay at their home those few days as pleasant and comfortable as possible.

Father at once became pastor of Shiloh Church, in the nearby village of Ovilla. That community was thickly settled, and the Cumberland Presbyterians predominated. Every service brought a full house of villagers, farmers and a sprinkle of cowboys. Every man wore a big Texas sombrero, and while at work all wore gloves.

Father preached at Midlothian, and occasionally at one other place I cannot now remember.

He purchased a farmer's outfit and rented a farm and Lon and I farmed that summer. The yield of



## TO THE LONE STAR STATE

cotton and corn was good and the outlook was bright.

During the summer and fall father was engaged in holding protracted meetings. Among other trips he made for this purpose was one to Montague County, in northwestern Texas.

I have the diary father kept of that trip, being the only complete writing of his I have except the notes of his texts for sermons kept in small pocket note books, and one letter.

There was a drought in Montague County, and as usual in such occurrences, people were suffering. He had a relative in that county by the name of David Mitchell, a former White Countian, and also a Cumberland Presbyterian minister. The latter came to our home and prevailed on father to go to Montague County to hold some protracted meetings, and that was the reason for the visit.

My father's diary contained the following:

"On the first day of July, 1886, in company with the Rev. D. L. Mitchell, I took the train at Midlothian, Ellis County, Texas, for Montague County, Texas. Reached Fort Worth 11:30 A.M. From there we went to S. M. Parker's, and stayed all night. Parker was formerly from White County, and lives four miles from Fort Worth. Preached at Red Wing, from St. John 12:2.

"Next morning we were driven into the city by



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Mr. Parker, who carried us over the City. We were well pleased with what we saw. This is a fast-thriving city.

“We left this place at 9:00 o'clock A.M., on the northwest bound train; reached Sun Set about Noon, where we got off the train and took dinner with the Rev. Mr. Norris, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. We were met at this place by Bro. Mitchell's son, who had brought horses to convey us to Forestburgh.

“We had to ride 14 or 15 miles through a brushy, sandy country, under the almost scorching rays of a Texas sun. If all of Montague county is like this, I do not want to see any more of it.

“Reached Forestburgh about one hour by sun, tired and weary. Stayed all night with Rev. D. L. Mitchell.

“Saturday: Slept well last night. Left Forestburgh in the afternoon for Mt. Tabor, eight miles from Forestburgh. Stopped on the road and took supper with Bro. Mattocks, an elder of Mt. Tabor congregation. We passed through some very fertile valleys this evening. Reached the church about dark—had a large congregation—preached from the seventh chapter of Judges. Stayed all night with Bro. Berry Parr, an elder of the church.

“Sunday: Preached today to an attentive audience from Mark 11:22. We continued the meeting ten

## TO THE LONE STAR STATE

days—had ten professions. Six were reclaimed. I preached sixteen times.

“The weather continues dry and hot.

“After the meeting closed I went to Montague town just to see the place. They have some substantial stone buildings here. Met the Rev. Mr. Baker of the C. P. Church.

“From Mt. Tabor I went back to Forestburgh. Preached Thursday night from Job 26:14.

“Friday evening we went to Clear Creek congregation, about six miles from Forestburgh. We commenced the meeting on Friday night and continued it ten days, had 13 professions and three were reclaimed. This was a glorious meeting. Preached eleven times. This is a rich country.

“The Rev. Mr. Bowman of Cook County, Texas, came to this meeting on Thursday and remained until the meeting closed.

“Went back to Forestburgh Sunday evening. Stayed all night with Bro. Rheagan.

“Times are hard in this county. Crops are nearly a failure owing to the drought and chintz-bug. Found some good water here. The people are quite sociable—but hard-run owing to failure in crops.

“July 26. Left this morning for Sun Set. Left Sun Set at Noon for Fort Worth, which place I reached at three o'clock P.M. Stayed here three hours and then took the train for Midlothian, which

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

place I reached at nine o'clock P.M. Thus ended my trip to North West Texas."

The personal letter referred to was dated June 26, 1886, to Rev. James M. Martin, a prominent minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and who had been engaged with father in holding protracted meetings in Tennessee. He was urged to remove to Texas, which he soon did. In the letter father spoke of the kindness of the Texas people, and their generosity, and stated that members of other denominations had voluntarily given him help.

I recall at all the meetings my father held in Texas near our home there were large crowds, all eager to hear, and the warmth with which he was received was of a genuine nature. That was the first year of his ministry that allowed him to devote all his time and talents to the service nearest his heart—serving his God.

## CHAPTER IX

### NOTES FOR SERMONS



IN THE two small note books referred to are texts and “catch phrases” for father’s sermons. They are all familiar to me. The charm of the resonant and eloquent voice which held the rapt attention of those who heard the sermons is lacking, and, of course, to a stranger who reads these notes they seem dry reading. Nevertheless, I shall quote here two of the texts followed by the notes, just as father wrote them:

“O, Give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever.” Psalm 136-1.

Truly, God is good, all nations of earth have acknowledged this truth.

I. There is a goodness of being which is the natural perfection of a thing; there is a goodness of will which is the righteousness of a person; there is a goodness of the hand which we call liberality, doing good to others.

By the goodness of God we do not mean the goodness of His essence or the perfection of His nature.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

God is thus good because His name is infinitely perfect.

Nor is it the same as the blessedness of God but something flowing from His blessedness.

Had not the sun a fullness of light in itself, it could not enrich the world with its beams.

Nor is it the same with the holiness of God. The holiness of God is the rectitude of His Nature. The goodness of God is the effusion of His will, whereby He is beneficial to His creatures.

Nor is the goodness of God the same as the mercy of God.

Again, by the goodness of God is meant:

The bounty of God.

This is the notion of goodness in the world; when we say a good man we mean either a holy man in his life, or a charitable or liberal man in the management of his goods.

The goodness of God comprehends all His attributes, all the acts of God are nothing else but the effusions of His goodness, distinguished by several names, according to the objects about which it is exercised.

When Moses prayed to see the glory of God, God said to him, I will make all my goodness pass before thee.

The whole catalog of mercy, grace, long suffering,

## NOTES FOR SERMONS

great forbearance and gentleness are streams flowing from this fountain.

When it confers happiness without merit it is grace.

When it bestows happiness against merit it is mercy.

When it bears with provoking rebels it is long suffering, all summed up in this one word goodness.

The nature of this goodness is:

Communicative, diffusiveness. Without goodness He would cease to be a Deity, and without diffusiveness He would cease to be good.

“Thou art good, and doest good, teach me Thy statutes.”

II. The manifestation of this goodness:

In creation of the beauties of nature and in the creation of man.

How much of goodness is visible in His body, how neatly has He wrought this tabernacle of clay, this earthly house; it is a casket made by a divine hand for enclosing a priceless jewel, a palace made of dust and lodged in it is an immortal soul.

But what is this to that goodness which shines in the nature of the soul?

In Redemption:

The whole gospel is nothing but one entire mirror of divine goodness.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

The whole of redemption is wrapped up in that one expression of the angel's song: 'Good will toward men.'

Goodness was the spring of redemption.

It was a pure goodness. God was under no obligation to pity our misery, and repair our ruin.

There is more of his bounty expressed in the verse 'God so loved the world,' than there is in the whole volume of the world.

If God be so good, how unworthy is contempt or abuse of his goodness.

Shall we enjoy the mercies given and forget the donor?

The author of our redemption is great because it took extreme suffering to purchase it;

It is able to save to the uttermost, and none are neglected except those who will not have Jesus to reign over them.

Another text and notes are as follows:

Acts 17, 16-23:

"16. Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the City wholly given to idolatry.

17. Therefore, disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

18. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans,

## NOTES FOR SERMONS

and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? Some others, He seemeth to be a setter-forth of strange gods; because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

19. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

20. For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean.

21. (For all the Athenians, and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

22. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom, therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

"1st. The Epicureans were the Materialists of Athens who followed the Atomic theory of Democritus.

They believed that the world with all its varied forms of beauty—its plants and animals, its men and women, its literature and art, was the fully developed result of a fortuitous concourse of Atoms.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

The gods, they said, led an untroubled life, taking no part in earthly affairs; consequently they were not to be regarded as objects either of superstitious veneration or disquieting fear.

Their ethical system was embodied in the principle that happiness is the true aim of life, and that happiness consists in the fullest temporal enjoyment.

Virtue has no value except in so far as it is agreeable.

Happiness is to be attained, however, not by sensual indulgence, for that entails pain, but by tranquility of soul, doing nothing and thinking of nothing, present or future, calculated to give pain.

Death is annihilation; and there was no terror to the Epicurean in simply ceasing to be.

The Stoics were Pantheists. According to them, God and matter, body and spirit, are the same in essence.

Matter is the passive foundation of things; God the active and formative power of matter.

2nd. The world is God's body; God the world's soul.

Men are but parts of the universal Deity, and consequently individual freedom is a myth. Everything in the universe, animate and inanimate, is inspired by the divine life, ruled by the divine will, and destined to return to the divine unity.

## NOTES FOR SERMONS

This withering system sets aside at once the personality of God, and the responsibility of man.

3rd. The Areopagus was a most honored place in Athens.

It was a mound of rugged rock, its side cliffs varied from ten to thirty feet in height and its broad top descending with an easy slope to the South.

A flight of twenty steps, hewn in the rock, led to its top, on it was 'Mars Hill.'

Here Paul stood. Here he preached the gospel of Christ.

Christ is my rock, upon it I have taken my stand. I can feel it firm under my feet.

Not a shadow of a doubt."

## CHAPTER X

### IN TEXAS



FATHER took no part in our farm work, and I cannot recall his coming to the fields where brother and I worked during the farming season. He gave his entire time to his ministerial work—a thing he had longed to do.

After we had gathered our crop we moved from the Peter Raper place to a house near Shiloh Church. This was early November. In a few days father suddenly became ill and he was found to be suffering from pneumonia. He was ill only about ten days when he passed away November 25, 1886.

My sister Jemmie May was just a month old, and my stepmother, not enjoying the best of health, found herself in a new country with the responsibility of six children on her shoulders. She bravely faced the situation and in doing so she had the affectionate regard and active co-operation of all that community.

My father was buried in the Shiloh Church graveyard, and the memory of those days of sorrow will never fade from my mind, nor will I ever cease to love

## IN TEXAS

the people of that community for the way they treated us.

Mother decided to return at once to Tennessee. This was in December.

Miss Mollie Cope, a member of Zion Church and a writer of marked ability, was chosen to prepare a suitable epitaph marking father's grave. She was a great admirer of my father, and I recall when he preached at Zion she was always present. She wrote the following, which was cut in the stone marking his grave:

Tread lightly, stranger, this is holy sod  
Here sleeps a servant of the Most High God  
A mighty preacher, full of wondrous zeal  
To tell the world his Master's power to heal.

The widow's friend, friend to the fatherless  
Earth's sorrowing ones ne'er knew him but to bless;  
In manhood's prime he stood on Zion's wall  
With armor on, when came his Master's call:

"It is enough, thine earthly labors leave,  
Put by thine armor, I grant thee sweet release;  
Up higher come, thou good and faithful son  
The palm of victory and crown of glory won.

Of earth-born sorrows thou shalt have no more  
I give thee rest, instead of trials sore."  
He dropped his sword and hastened to obey  
Immortal Mercy kissed his soul away.



## CHAPTER XI

### AN APPRAISAL OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

By Rev. Paul E. Doran, Supervisor,  
Cumberland Mountain Presbytery.\*



MY PURPOSE is to write an appreciation of the work of the man, rather than a biographical sketch. His son has told the story of his father's life.

I began my work in the same territory in which his main work was done twenty-eight years after his work here was finished, and yet the echoes of his life were still ringing in the region. Some of his sayings were being quoted often, and numerous anecdotes were frequently related by those whose lives had been touched by his. The main work of his life fell within the period 1873 to 1886. His principal labor was confined to White County, though as Headmaster of Cumberland Institute he touched hundreds of young people from other counties. In his evangelistic work he also touched other parts of the territory.

\* Dr. Doran is one of the outstanding ministers of Tennessee. In his official and ministerial work he covers substantially the same territory which my father served and at my request he kindly consented to write an appraisal of father's service for which I am greatly indebted to him. THE AUTHOR

## AN APPRAISAL OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

In writing an appreciation of the life and work of any man it is necessary to take into account the people with whom he lived and the background of life as well as the conditions of life. Let a word be said, therefore, concerning these.

This country commonly called from the beginning the Mountain District, of which White County is about the center, was settled by Scotch-Irish stock mainly from Virginia and North Carolina. The early settlers were principally veterans of the Revolution, who received their lands as grants for service. They were a high-minded, industrious, and law-abiding people. The western part of the territory which was included in the lands belonging to the Cumberland Settlements began to be settled as early as 1789. The eastern part began to be settled soon after 1795, and by 1800, the whole District was sufficiently settled for churches to be formed. Considering the race stock, it was natural that all the early churches should be Presbyterians. The Johnson Church at the head of the Calfkiller River and Cherry Creek Church in the next valley, both Presbyterian, were established in 1800, the first churches of any kind in this Mountain District. Prospect, on Bear Creek, Smyrna, Granville, Shiloh on West Form, the Arbor Church, on Riley Creek, Hilham, and other Presbyterian Churches, were formed in 1802, while Cave Spring, Bethel, Zion, Union, in

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Hickory Valley, Cedar Crest, and many other Presbyterian Churches, were formed in 1805, or soon thereafter.

The distinguishing thing about all these Irish and Scotch settlements was that whenever a church was established there was also established, often in the same building, a school of which the minister was usually the head. At Sparta, for instance, was the famous Priestly Academy, founded by Dr. Hesikiah Priestly, who until his death was both pastor of the Presbyterian Church and head of the Academy. At Cherry Creek Dr. Compton was pastor of the church and head of Cumberland Institute until his death, about 1830.

Many of these old schools were never chartered, but they rendered a great service for they attracted young men and women of rare ability who received there the inspiration for service. Because they were never chartered there is now no record of them except in a few old journals and diaries or in connection with the biographies of men who attended them.

In the "Life of Jefferson Dillard Goodpasture" written by Albert Virgil Goodpasture, reference is made to Union Academy in Overton County, and a description of its activities. Aside from this, I know of no other record of this old academy.

Some of them were chartered. Cumberland Institute received its charter in 1825, but it had then been



## AN APPRAISAL OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

in existence a quarter of a century. We of our day can hardly appreciate the power of these old academies and centers of religion. In connection with most of them was a debating society. The debates were really public forums, and were attended by the whole country-side for miles around. They were sources of information and inspiration for men who had no books or papers. These continued as long as the old academies lived.

James Tate Williams grew up in this kind of atmosphere, for he was native to the region. His father Jesse Scoggins Williams, and his mother, were citizens of White County, and are still remembered for their honesty and piety. Their son's work was for and with his own people, and he gave himself to it with a will. He impressed himself on the life of the whole region as no outsider could have done. He was "Brother Jimmie Williams" to all sorts of people. Conditions of life were hard. The region had undergone a great change since the early days. The pioneers had suffered many privations in conquering a wilderness, but after these early days were gone life had become secure, and the means of a living comparatively easy. Many people had built comfortable homes, and were even enjoying some luxuries. Then came the Civil War. This war was especially cruel in White County. The county was divided in sentiment, the majority favoring the Confederacy, but



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

thousands were also loyal to the Union, and some of the finest soldiers in the Union Army were recruited in White County as volunteers.

In this section it was indeed a Civil War. Great armies marched through the county, and both sides kept troops here throughout the war. There were many atrocities committed here during the war, and bad feeling was created, which lingered long afterwards. Reconstruction brought with it many problems, and kept alive the spirit of wartime. Men who hated each other bitterly, and fought each other savagely, were trying again to build their lives side by side. In this troubled time, in the early seventies, Reverend Williams began his work as a minister and teacher.

Yet so faithfully did he perform his task that I have never heard it stated which side his people were on during the war. It is one of the finest tributes that could be paid to a man of his calling. He really was engaged in rebuilding what the ravages of war had destroyed, and he seems to have realized fully the nature of his task, and to have been all things to all men. There was great distress, and he shared without complaining the general straitened conditions of the country. His labors were remarkable for their great variety. During much of the time he was Stated Clerk of his Presbytery—the old Sparta Presbytery; he preached regularly in several

## AN APPRAISAL OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

churches; he was a powerful evangelist, and held many successful revivals; he produced at least a part of the food for himself and family; and during much of the time he was busy in the class room as a teacher or as an administrator. Always he was the friend and adviser of young men.

Such a man in our day would be receiving a grant in salary from National Headquarters, but no such funds were available for him. His was a weak denomination financially, for he was a Cumberland Presbyterian. This church had sprung up in the Lower Cumberland Country in 1810, and though it had from the first a wonderful spirit, it never developed much strength financially. Though the churches of the Cumberland country were all Presbyterian in the beginning, from the coming into the Mountain District in 1819 of Robert Donnell and the young Samuel Aston, fiery evangelists of the young Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the older church began to yield to the new.

In 1833 Cherry Creek Church went into the new movement under the leadership of Rev. Jesse Hickman, and there was then not another Presbyterian church left in the whole District, and this was destined to be true until the new spirit of evangelism possessed the old church after the Civil War, after which time the old church began to reappear in increasing numbers until the Reunion, in 1906, at

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

which time the two churches became again one except for a continuing remnant of the Cumberland Church.

During the years of Rev. Williams' ministry there was much bitterness among the churches. Baptists, Methodists, and Disciples were carrying on vigorous and bitter campaigns. Debates as to the merits of the respective churches were very common, and some Cumberland Presbyterians were drawn into the debates. Reverend Williams seems to have held himself aloof from all this, and to have spent his energies in constructive ways. This probably accounts for the universal esteem in which he was held.

During an active life he served at different times as principal of the two old schools, one was Zion Academy, and the other was Cumberland Institute. Zion Academy was established soon after 1800, but not until 1825 did it really become a school. Before that it seems to have been conducted in the homes of the teachers. In that year it was organized with a Board of Control, and became formally an academy. It continued to function largely as a local academy until the Civil War, when it was closed for awhile.

For four years Reverend Williams lived there in a cottage which stood where Zion Consolidated Public School now stands, and he was principal of the Academy and pastor of Zion Cumberland Presbyterian Church. During these years the old time



## AN APPRAISAL OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

glory of the place returned, and young men from a distance came to Zion to study. These were fruitful years, but tragic for the Williams family. During this period two little daughters and one son died. These were Effie, Mamie, and Ernest. They must also have been years of great privation and hardship.

Of Cumberland Institute, Monroe Seals, in his History of White County, has the following to say:

“Cumberland Institute was one of two classical schools in the Cumberland Mountain region, the other being Alpine, in Overton County. Some of the subjects taught were Higher Mathematics, Latin, Greek, and German. Cumberland Institute was a boarding school, and at one time is said to have had students from seven states. It was sponsored by the Presbytery, and one of the buildings on the campus was known as Preacher’s Hall, where candidates for the ministry lived. Perhaps the most famous head of the school was Rev. James Tate Williams. He became nationally known after his death through pupils he had taught.”

In this school he had an opportunity to exercise freely his great powers of heart and brain. He often preached in Cherry Creek Church, and in other churches of the region. In the old Session Book there is the record of a meeting held by him at Cherry Creek in one of these years, in which more than forty people were added to the church.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Discipline was strict in the school in those days, and yet there must have been the very finest of fellowship. Every Sunday morning the faculty and students marched in a body down the mountain a mile to Cherry Creek Church for Sunday School and worship. On Sunday evening the services were held on the campus, being generally conducted by Rev. Williams. The candidates for the ministry helped in these meetings and were, therefore, often in his house. Preacher's Hall stood next to the school buildings.

At Cumberland Institute in those days was worked out a rather remarkable system of self-help whereby poor boys and girls were enabled to get an education. A number of small cottages were erected on the campus which were let to little groups of students who brought from home their provisions and prepared and served their own meals. Tuition might also be paid in surplus products of the home and farm. In this way many a poor boy and girl was able to get an education who otherwise would have been denied that privilege. Whether Reverend Williams originated this system or not no one now knows. It was probably a custom of that school from the beginning. But surely he used the plan to the fullest possible extent. Boys and girls of that day had an opportunity of getting an education for whom with all our boasted modern advantages there would

## AN APPRAISAL OF JAMES TATE WILLIAMS

hardly be any way open now. Provision was made also for the boy who could attend school for only a few weeks. That, together with the forums which attracted many adults, made of the school a real Folk School many years before that term was known in this country. Many of the very poorest boys went out from that school to distinguish themselves and to render valuable service in nearly every section of the nation.

In January, 1886, James Williams went to Texas, where he died in November of the same year. His active life had been short, but his contribution to society had been great. There is no way of evaluating the worth of such a life. As has been indicated, some of his children died in early childhood. One daughter, Nannie, became the wife of Ed Bullock, an Elder in the old Robinson church, one of the churches in which her father had preached. She was a saintly woman, and the leader of the young peoples' group until she was forced by failing health to give up the work. One daughter married Major James T. Quarles, who distinguished himself both in the War with Spain and the World War. For years she was President of the Women's Presbyterial Society in Cumberland Mountain Presbytery, and is still respected and deeply loved by all the Presbyterian women of this section. One son, Joe V. Williams, of Chattanooga, has distinguished himself

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

as a lawyer. He inherited some of his father's sterling qualities.

After the death of the Reverend Williams his widow, Mrs. Jennie Shugart Williams, returned to the old section, and taught at Zion, Doyle College, Robinson, Granville, and possibly other places. She, too, made her contribution to the life of this section.

James Tate Williams and his wife both still live in the lives of those they trained. Who can say when the influence of such lives will end?

PART IV

RECOLLECTIONS OF  
JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS







HOME IN HICKORY VALLEY WHERE THE AUTHOR WAS BORN





HOME AT CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE



JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS WHEN TWENTY-ONE





JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS IN 1918

## CHAPTER I

### CHILDHOOD DAYS

“Youth has its heyday—such a shining page,  
Unshadowed, lit by many a halcyon way,  
Its birthright, its inalienable heritage;  
Shall we not, friend, whose locks are tinged with  
gray  
Forget in dreams the heavy hours of age  
And tread again with youth the primrose way?”

*Anonymous*



TO GATHER the data and recall the incidents that I am now about to jot down I had to spin the reel of memory, and live again the golden hours of youth.

This concentration has brought to mind a thousand things, some of joy, some of sorrow, but from the mixture I know that the days of my youth were not different from those of the ordinary boy.

My forebears were men and women schooled to hardship, none born to wealth, but were plain, honest, God-fearing people, and, so far as I know, none brought dishonor on the name.

I have promised my children I would write in

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

these Recollections a true story of my life—the bad as well as the good.

I was a mischievous boy, usually in trouble. I lived up to the general reputation of most sons of ministers, always in the front when any mischief was going on.

My birthplace was on a farm at the head of Hickory Valley, which constituted the dowery presented to my mother by her father on her marriage, and when she and my father passed away it was sufficient to give my brother, sister and myself an education equivalent to that afforded by the present-day high school.

Lack of interest in the place of my birth prevailed until after my marriage when, for the first time in 1916, I made a visit to the place with my sons Robert and Joe V., Jr., and later with all my children. The vines and roses that I am sure clustered about our little home in 1872 had all disappeared, and were supplanted by weeds and briars.

We lived on this farm until February, 1873, at which time my father purchased Cumberland Institute located about nine miles north of Sparta, to which place we then moved.

My first memories of life cling 'round this spot. The distance from the foot of the mountain to the bench where the Institute buildings were located





JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS IN 1933





## CHILDHOOD DAYS

was more than half a mile. As a boy I could climb it at a trot, without being the least fatigued.

Most of the buildings at the Institute were located on a perfectly level spot, and when one reached it there was spread before his view a beautiful panorama of the Cherry Creek Settlement, and beyond were the Goulton Mountains.

The location of the Institute was usually called "The Hill."

On entering the "big gate" to the right were located the "Preacher's" cabins, four in number, forming a square, with one huge chimney in the center used by all the cabins. This allowed fireplaces in the corner of each cabin which always seemed odd to me, but obviously it was done for reasons of economy and convenience.

Next came the schoolhouse, a one-story, one room building, painted white. In this the recitations were heard, and it was only occupied otherwise by the younger pupils.

In those days teacher's children entered school at a very early age, and so from 1877 to 1880 I was one of the pupils.

Next were two cabins; then my father's residence, and beyond were two rows of cabins facing each other, there being altogether about fifteen cabins on top of The Hill, and several others on the side of the mountain.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Below was one of the finest springs in all that country, with a flow unchanged. In 1921 when I went with my children on a visit to the Spring, we found there a large copper "wildcat still," but not in operation.

Some simple sports stand out vividly in my memory of this sacred spot. First came marbles, the principal diversion, and young as I was, I was almost unbeaten at this game. There were horizontal bars which we called "acting poles," single and double, erected about five feet above the ground, on which we performed, and in which I starred in "skinning the cat" and other feats. I was lithe as a cat, could run up or down the mountain, climb a tree, and even walk barefooted over chestnut burs, and when I played a prank on some sleepy student and had to make a quick get-away, I had no trouble in out-distancing my victim in fleeing from his wrath.

Once a week father took all the school boys to the very top of the mountain on the east. He would then have them stand in a circle, and at his command yell like demons, which echoed and re-echoed. This was a ten to fifteen minute exercise to expand their lungs, and since many of my Williams' ancestry had died of tuberculosis, I have always believed that exercise, plus the exercise I had running up and down that mountain, saved me from that dread disease.

## CHILDHOOD DAYS

Few years ago I called on Morgan Davis, at Cookeville. He had been a student of my father at Cumberland Institute, and on mentioning these exercises he stated that one day he was at Yankee-town, about five miles below the Institute, and a friend told him the noise that came from the top of the mountain when the boys gathered for the "yelling exercises" was causing a great disturbance in his neighborhood, and the friend said the noise was so loud that on one occasion when he was trying to take an afternoon nap he was awakened.

The big event was the closing exercises of the Spring term, when large crowds of the relatives and friends of the students attended. An arbor was constructed for use at such times, since the school building was not large enough to accommodate the crowds. Seeing all the visitors, and the number and variety of the vehicles in which they came, mostly farm wagons drawn by two mules or horses, was always to me an outstanding event.

Another annual event was the May ramble, which occurred the first Saturday in May of each year. The only one I ever missed was when my father desired my assistance in building a fence on the farm he had purchased on Cherry Creek. That May, 1885, will always be remembered by me because it was the last of the rambles, and I had attended one each year since I was able to walk.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Other things which stand out in my memory were gathering apples and chestnuts; picking blackberries, drying apples on scaffolds; exploring caves; watching my father "rob the bee gums"; digging ginseng, etc.

Every Sunday we attended Sunday school at Cherry Creek Church. Once a month, sometimes more often, father delivered a sermon at that Church, and with all my youthful shortcomings I was anxious to and did hear him every time possible. This habit was faithfully followed to the day of his death.

Cumberland Institute being on a mountain was difficult to reach, and in rainy weather it was almost impossible to get a vehicle over the roads. After traveling over the macadamized and smooth pikes that today are in use in all parts of that section, one wonders how wagons could have been drawn over the roads that existed when we lived on the mountain.

The girls and boys in those days were anxious to receive an education, and in attending that school they exemplified a pioneer spirit. But from the halls of this old institution there went women and men who have added much to the culture and learning of the communities where they cast their lots.

One of the teachers at the Institute was William P. Smith, who was reared in Hickory Valley. He had a son Howard Smith, of my age, who has long been in charge of Brooks Aviation Field Post Office, at San

## CHILDHOOD DAYS

Antonio, Texas. One day Howard and I were playing around the vats of the old tannery at the Institute. The vats were about six feet deep, and water had gathered in them up to within eighteen inches of the top. Just what happened is best described in a letter written to me by Howard in June, 1937.

“The story of my falling into the tannery vat is vividly remembered because it was often referred to by Mother. I was four years old. You were not strong enough to pull me out so you held on to my hand and yelled for help and this attracted the attention of some women who were gathering chestnuts near by, and they came and pulled me out, and thus I believe you saved my life. It was remarkable that one so young as you were would have presence of mind to do the right thing at the right time. I still think you should have had a medal. We were ‘regular boys’ and some day I want to go back to that spot.”

During this period I was often permitted to visit grandmother Wallace and also grandfather Williams, in Hickory Valley. My daughter Gertrude, on a visit to Aunt Josie Glenn, in 1933, wrote me she had commented on my visits to the Valley, and among other things in her letter Gertrude wrote:

“She told me about the time your Grandmother Williams scolded you and your brother

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

for something, and you replied: 'You're the meanest durl (girl) I ever saw.' She said you and Lon preferred her mother to your other grandmother, at least, you were always going over to her house, so finally one day your Grandmother Wallace said, 'Joe, why do you like your other grandmother better than you do me?' and you replied, 'Tause she 'panks me and makes me beez a dood boy and you don't.' You were three then. That was certainly logic appearing ripe at an immature and early age."

## CHAPTER II

### INCIDENTS WHILE LIVING AT ZION

1880 TO 1884



IN 1880 we removed to Zion, which was eight miles west of Sparta, in what was called "the Flat Woods." At Zion there was a Cumberland Presbyterian Church, a large frame building, painted white, and hard by the usual Church graveyard. The school had long been known as Zion Academy.

My father, I imagine, was induced to go there because it was not only located in one of the best communities in that part of the country, but was more accessible than our place at Cumberland Institute.

Near the Church was an abandoned field and the people of that section purchased a part of it and erected a log house, and barn, and dug a well for our use, and there were also erected a number of dormitories for the use of students.

During the time we were there the school was crowded, many coming from adjoining counties. I attended every session of school during that four



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

years, this being the last schooling I had under my father. My recollection is that during all those years I had done no more than reach "baker" in Webster's Blue Back Speller. All who studied the speller will recall that "baker" was just a little beyond the A, B, C's.

While we resided at Zion I continued regular visits to Cumberland Institute, usually walking the eight miles. Grandfather Williams and grandmother Williams passed away while residing there. Soon after their deaths Aunt Josie married. She was then twenty-two years of age, and a perfectly beautiful woman, very religious, and always insisted I become a preacher. I loved her as a mother.

At Zion I continued my mischievous conduct, occasionally in a fight, or engaged in breaking the rules of school. Carrick Lowery was a student at Zion at the same time. He became Marshal of the Supreme Court at Nashville, and in 1919 I happened in Court one day and he introduced me to some visiting attorneys with the statement that my father regularly opened school with two exercises, first a prayer, and second a whipping for Carrick and myself—and the statement was not far from the truth.

During those days I thought I was not so bad, but made myself believe I was being experimented with as an example and warning to others. But I was

## INCIDENTS WHILE LIVING AT ZION

wrong. My father never whipped me when I did not deserve it.

At Zion, in 1884, I was constantly a duplicate of Peck's bad boy. One day I remember I got a deserved lashing. To annoy my father I got excused and retired to the woods. There I filled my shirt and pants with dry leaves and returned to school. This was done with the idea I would be prepared for all eventualities. With a wad of paper bounced off the head of one boy I stirred him, and while another boy was in class I placed a bent pin in his seat, and when he returned and he sat on the point he jumped into the air and let out a Comanche Indian yell that threw the whole school into confusion.

It did not take my father long to get into action. He called me to the front; before he struck me I yelled "murder," but never shed a tear during the lashing. I might mention here that the leaves I had stuffed into my clothing did not protect me in the slightest. When the proceeding ended I calmly turned to the blackboard and spat a mouthful of saliva gathered for that purpose on the wall!

Well, that was going too far. Fresh gum switches were sent for, and when school closed for the day, Father gave me a real thrashing—just what I deserved, and I might add that my hide became considerably toughened, due to the frequent application of those gum switches.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

After that whipping my feelings, to say the least, were hurt, and I went to the rear of the school building where there was an oak tree. I announced that I was going to "end it all;" that I intended to climb that tree and stay up there until I starved to death, or jump out of it. Climb it I did. The whole student body gathered to witness the feat. After I had climbed about twenty feet my father came out and said to the students: "Go away, he will soon come down."

The spectators retired, and soon there was wafted to my chosen seat-for-starvation-or-jump the appetizing odor of ham and gravy. The shadows of night had begun to gather, and, having no audience to admire my courage, I soon came down to terra firma and sneaked home. I found the entire family at supper, acting as if nothing had happened. No one paid any attention to me when I joined them at the table in the long narrow dining room, and soon all was forgiven.

I have always believed I was the pioneer in pole or tree sitting which a few years ago was in vogue, but I lay no claims to having remained aloft a longer period than any other and, alas, my asinine exploit was without hope of reward.

### DISOBEDIENCE BRINGS A SHOWER OF STARS

While we were living at Zion I was in the habit of

120



## INCIDENTS WHILE LIVING AT ZION

going to prayer-meeting alone, so I could meet my friends and have a little fun before the solemn services began.

During a particular week in the summer of 1884, my father was busy trying to keep me in the straight and narrow path. He warned me to remain home one evening and accompany him and the family to the weekly prayer service. I slipped out of the house and ran down the road towards the church; as I turned the corner of the rail fence enclosing our home my toe struck a root that had been broken off and I was thrown to the ground, my head striking the end of a fence rail. The result was a myriad of stars flashing before me, and a deep gash in my scalp, followed by a Macedonian call for help.

My father came and I was taken back to the house where he gently dressed my wound before going to church, and since he was in a hurry to go he did not have time to even reprimand me for disobeying him, nor did he do so after returning from church. His kindness in not scolding me made a deep impression on my youthful mind, and the scar that resulted from my refusal to obey has been a constant reminder that disobedience brings its own penalties.



## CHAPTER III

### BACK TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE



WHILE residing at Zion my step-mother's health became impaired. Two of her infant children, Ernest and Mamie, had passed away, and believing a higher altitude and change of scene would be of great benefit to her, we returned to Cumberland Institute in December, 1884, and school was again opened there in January following. The two sessions taught there in 1885 were the last taught by my father.

In January, 1885, my father purchased a farm on Cherry Creek, near Yankeetown. He experimented in agriculture that year by having my brother and myself do the farming. We rode the horse provided for us from Cumberland Institute to the scene of the experiment, a distance of three or four miles, taking "time-about" riding in front. We carried our lunch in a tin bucket, and the one who rode in the rear commonly carried the bucket. One evening as we were returning home I was in the saddle and a controversy arose as to who should carry the bucket. I insisted my brother should do so, since he was riding in the rear, to which he demurred. When we reached the

## BACK TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE

foot of the mountain I decided to end the controversy by pitching the bucket into a fence corner, and this I did.

When we arrived home without the bucket an explanation was in order. Father acted as judge and jury, and brother and I stated our contentions as to why the bucket was left on the way. At the conclusion father adjudged that *I* should immediately walk—not ride—down that mountain and bring back that bucket.

Here was a test of my physical courage, to defy my father and face the wrath that would follow disobedience, or take the lonely trip down the mountain side.

The path to the foot of the mountain was lined on each side by big boulders and trees, and while I debated what to do I could envisage Indians, bears and wild men lying in wait for me every step of the way. I just knew I would never get back alive.

With this thought in mind I decided I would go, and that I would make my father regret “all the days of his life” his decree that had brought about the destruction of his younger son.

I went to an old chest where the munitions of war were kept and got a bowie knife, handle and blade being at least a foot in length, and out in the darkness I started for that bucket. I had no lantern, and every rock and stump a foot high I imagined an

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

enemy, ready to spring at me. In my right hand I carried the bowie knife, swinging it in an arc before me. The speed I made down and up that path of danger has not, in my opinion, been exceeded in any Olympian effort, ancient or modern.

I fought my way up the mountain with the same daring I had fought my way down, and when I returned the bucket to the family altar I was supremely happy, and in my own mind I was a hero who feared no danger. My stubbornness was conquered, the bucket was saved, and nevermore was there any argument as to who should carry the bucket. A mere hint that it was my turn to shield it from harm and see that it arrived safely back to the old kitchen was sufficient.

## BLAINE AND LOGAN

“Did you ever see a dream walking?”

I have not, but I have driven a yoke of oxen and dreamed dreams, and a boy who has never had that experience and thrill has missed a lot in life.

In the Spring of 1884, while we were living at Cumberland Institute, father purchased for brother and myself two young steers and a cart. We had to name them, and since James G. Blaine and John A. Logan had just been nominated as Republican candidates for President and Vice-President, we,



## BACK TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE

without regard to creed or party, named our oxen "Blaine" and "Logan."

Our cup of happiness was overflowing. We hauled fire wood, gathered the crop, and searched for things that could be moved about. When we could find something that needed a change of scene we gladly accepted the task; it was not work to us, it meant a ride, and I am afraid we showed little mercy to our young oxen.

A boy learns to love animals if he can be hauled about, and our attachment for these generators of power knew no bounds. We combed and curried them, and saw that they had plenty of food and kindly attention. These oxen returned our affection and were our companions until January, 1886, when we removed to Texas. I well remember our grief when we were told we could not take our oxen, and they had to be sold.

Another pal we had was a little black fice we called "Vic." We had raised her from a pup, and wherever we went she trotted along. My brother and I proudly riding in that slowly moving cart drawn by Blaine and Logan, preceded by our faithful little dog Vic, were the envy of all the boys of our neighborhood. Never since that time have I felt a greater elation than I experienced in that lowly equipage.

In my later years I have oft times wondered what became of those patient beasts. Did they bring joy



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

to other boys, or were they sold to some cruel master who mistreated them, or, perhaps, butchered them for food? I have always hoped they fell into gentle hands, and that other boys knew the joy we felt in ownership.

### THE MILL BOY

Up until we moved to Texas I was the mill boy. I was active and liked to ride a horse. My cup of joy brimmed to the top when I could "go to mill." It was a delight to get out and go on an early trip to the mill, and I had learned the art and regularly practiced it of taking out a gallon or so of corn and swapping it for candy and chewing gum. I coveted this service of going to mill, and made it yield something of an advantage in those things I could always procure on such trips.

In those days a country store was commonly located near a meal or flour mill. These are seldom seen now, and boys growing up in this age cannot realize what they are missing by not getting to "go to mill."

At Zion the old grist mill dear to my heart was at Fancher's Falls, on Taylor's Creek, and was about four miles from my home. It was owned by J. K. P. Fancher, father of my boyhood friend, Judge F. T. Fancher, who has risen to prominence in the profession of law. The Fancher family were members of

## BACK TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE

my father's church at Zion. Aunt Vina Lansden, my Sunday School teacher, was the second wife of Mr. Fancher.

It took me an hour to an hour and a half to ride from our home to this Mill.

A few months before these lines are penned I rode this distance in an automobile driven by Donald Fancher, a nephew of the former owner, in about twelve minutes. At that time I walked over the premises of the Fancher homestead, the old mill and the store. The latter has almost rotted away, but the mill is still in operation.

What a cluster of sweet memories came back to me on that trip. I remembered my pleasant custom on each trip in the early eighties to withdraw the part due me to purchase sweets; how I stood in the old store inventorying the merchandise to be purchased by the natives in the settlement; and then back to the old mill to watch the water from the narrow race pour over the old water wheel, which kept the circular stones in motion so as to grind out the grist for hoecakes and corn bread, without which no family could then exist. Nearby, too, was the "ol' swimmin' hole" in Taylor's Creek, into which, during the summer months, I would take a brief plunge on these visits.

At Cumberland Institute I frequently went to two mills, one operated by John Wilhite, on Cherry

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Creek. He also had a small store. The mill pond there was the principal place for the boys in the neighborhood to go swimming. The other mill was Gilliland's Mill, on the Calf Killer River, down near Sparta, where both wheat and corn were ground. This point was about seven miles from our home, and I particularly coveted this trip because it took nearly a day to go and come. Of course there was a store nearby; in fact, without a store there would not have been much incentive for a boy to want to go to mill.

On some of these trips I had trouble with my sacks of meal or flour, occasioned by the fact that the miller, whose duty it was to unload and load the sacks, sometimes got more in one end of the sack than the other. In such event a twelve year old boy had a job to keep the sack on the horse. Many times I had to stop on the road and halt a passing traveler and get him to reload the sacks.

I liked to be around an old fashioned grist mill, and I imagine the reason was that there was one of this type on the Caney Fork River, owned by Grandfather Williams.

In 1936, Jabez G. Mitchell, now nearing the ninety mark, and who was reared in Hickory Valley, wrote me he looked after that mill one day, and on a full run it ground eight bushels of corn into meal. I still prefer corn meal that is water-ground, and when

## BACK TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE

I see the picture of a mill operated by water power  
my mind goes back to the days of my youth, and I  
associate these old mills with looms, spinning wheels,  
gourds for drinking water at wells; kerosene lanterns  
and lamps; muddy roads, and slowly moving vehicles.  
And these memories recall, too, that the hardships  
endured by our pioneer fathers no longer exist.



## CHAPTER IV

### “WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY”



IN THE late fall of 1885, my brother, without the knowledge of the family, left home with some neighbors who went in wagons to Texas. Naturally, my father was worried. The burden he had carried in trying to teach and carry on his ministerial work was more than one man could endure, and possibly for this reason he decided to remove to Texas. We bade good-bye to White County in early January, 1886.

We rented a large farm twenty-five miles south of Dallas, and that year, being fourteen, I was old enough to plow, hoe, pick cotton, etc., and all these things my brother Lon and I did. The result was reasonably favorable, and so for the first time I was, I am sure, a comfort to my father.

In picking cotton one must bend over all day long. One night I came home, my back tired and aching. After supper I said to my father, “What is a backache? Is it a condition where a fellow cannot get his back in a position where it will not ache?” “Well, I believe, son,” my father replied, “you have correctly described a true backache.”

## “WESTWARD COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY”

That year I went with Tommy Glenn, a former student of my father, at Zion, to Mansfield, Texas, and worked a week gathering grain, for which he paid me \$5. This was the first money I ever earned, and I used it to buy two pigs which I still had at our new home at Ovilla, when my father became ill and passed away.

My sister Jemmie May was born at Ovilla October, 1886, and while my stepmother was confined to her bed my father one Saturday night became ill with pneumonia. The next morning after breakfast I was delegated to go down to Shiloh Church, of which my father was pastor, and impart this information that my father was ill, and unable to preach that day. He grew worse and never preached again, and thus it was that his bad, mischievous boy became his last connecting link with his ministerial duties which he had continuously and faithfully performed from the time he was nineteen years of age.

To me my father was the most eloquent, interesting speaker I have ever known. His sermons were carefully prepared, short and to the point, and he illustrated his points with appropriate stories. In those days ministers were called to exhort their listeners; that is, at the close of the sermons at protracted meetings the unsaved were warned to forsake sin and turn to righteousness, and in this field I do not believe my father had a superior or one who was

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

more persuasive, and often have I heard others so speak of him.

Yes, father was a kindly, patient man, and I have the consolation of believing that during the last year of his life he was comforted by the fact that his two sons gave him nothing to worry about, but brought some cheer and comfort into the closing days of his busy life.

Always will I remember the year we spent in Texas. As is well-known, Texas was largely settled by Tennesseans and those from her sister states. No more hospitable, generous, men and women, in my opinion, live on this earth than those Texans. When my father passed away they called on our family in scores, and offered assistance, and the day we left our home to return to Tennessee they came from long distances to accompany us to the train.

The leaders in that band were two men I shall never forget—William Bryson and George Sawyer. They and others insisted that my stepmother accept financial help, but this she refused. The memory of that caravan as it wended its way from Ovilla to Midlothian to bid goodbye to the widow and family of their beloved pastor is still vivid.

On several occasions when I have gone back to the grave of my father I have made inquiries but learned all those noble men and women have passed on.

On the passing of father I determined to be worthy

## “WESTWARD COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY”

of his name, and profit by his example and teaching. Although I was only fourteen years of age I realized deeply that I had not taken full advantage of my opportunities, and I determined to have an education, but how or in what way was the question to be answered.



## CHAPTER V

### MY STEPMOTHER AND HER FAMILY

"I bow my head to the stepmother who loves into manhood and womanhood children whom another has loved into life. She must have a great heart already expanded by love to do this."  
Elbert Hubbard.



IN DECEMBER, 1886, our family consisted of my stepmother—we called her Ma,—myself and my brother Lon, 17, sister Lillie, 10, and half-sisters Effie, 8, Nannie, 2, and Jemmie May, two months old when we came from Texas to live with Mrs. Nancy Shugart, my stepmother's mother.

Mrs. Shugart was Irish, generous, courageous, and in my opinion, in a fight, she would have stood up and given a good account of herself against a battalion.

During the Civil War she had a fine saddle horse and another of little value. Colonel Blackburn, of the Federal Army, came her way and forcibly took the best horse and continued on his way to Liberty, in DeKalb County. On learning of this seizure Mrs. Shugart saddled her other horse and rode alone to

## MY STEPMOTHER AND HER FAMILY

Liberty, a distance of thirty-five miles, and notwithstanding the objecting sentinels she rode into the presence of Colonel Blackburn and demanded that he give up her horse. He refused, and it is said words of fire and brimstone were hurled at him by this lone woman, after which she marched around the camp, located her horse, changed her saddle to it and rode it back home, leading the horse she had ridden on the trip.

Mrs. Shugart was kind to my brother, my sister and myself and gave us exactly the same treatment she gave to her grandchildren. Lon and I made a crop that year, and felt perfectly at home. Mr. Shugart had died a few years after the Civil War, having long been an invalid.

The Shugart family was outstanding. There were five daughters; Mrs. John Jarred, Mrs. Jasper Johnson, mother of the late Dr. William M. Johnson and Ammon Johnson, of Sparta; Callie, who married George Johnson a short time after we came into the family, and my stepmother, Mrs. Jennie Shugart Williams.

A few years after her marriage to my father mother became ill. She was kind, patient, forgiving, and the fact that she rarely ever reprimanded me and never whipped me is proof of her angelic disposition. She was endowed with rare intelligence, and was highly educated. The last few years of her life I often

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

visited her and we spent many, many happy hours together.

She taught school in one of the tenement houses in the Shugart yard in the Spring of 1887. Among other students was D. L. Lansden, who afterwards became chancellor and then chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Tennessee; another was Richard H. Brown, now residing at Cookeville, and one of the leading ministers of that section.

Mother knew of my anxiety to secure an education, and during the summer she secured a position as teacher in Doyle College, located six miles south of Sparta. When she told her three stepchildren they were to go to Doyle with her and enter school my cup of joy was filled to the brim.

Soon after we entered school I visited Cousin Mollie Swafford Goff, at Sparta, and it was soon arranged that her husband, J. D. Goff, then County Court Clerk, would be appointed guardian for my brother, sister and myself.

That relation ripened into a deep and abiding love, and after spending four years in school Lillie and I made our home with the Goffs, and our own father and mother could not have shown us greater devotion.

During the first year at Doyle we stayed with mother. I cannot remember whether we paid any board, but I doubt if we did. At the end of that year



## MY STEPMOTHER AND HER FAMILY

Lon quit school and returned to Texas. Lillie remained with mother, but I removed to a boarding house nearby.

Lillie specialized in art and became quite proficient. I studied diligently and specialized in literature and history. I was not so strong in mathematics, especially geometry, surveying and book-keeping. I took an active part in baseball and football, the original type of the latter where the struggle was to kick the ball and keep it going until it crossed a fixed line, where one's chief aim was to render his opponent *hors de combat*, if possible.

I took an active part in public speaking, and at the Spring term, in 1889, won a gold medal for the delivery of an oration on the subject "American Patriotism," the medal having been given by Congressman John R. Neal, before his death in March, 1889. This achievement stirred an ambition to try to excel as a public speaker.

The fund in the hands of my guardian for my education was some \$500 to \$600 and to remain in school four years, I had to live frugally. In December, at the end of the third year, mother and her children made a visit to her mother's. I decided to walk over to Hickory Valley, and since I had but one suit of under clothes, I built a big fire, warmed a tub of water, stripped and washed my underclothing and socks, dried them while I was practising a nudist act



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

and then walked six miles over to Grandmother Wallace's, as happy a boy as ever lived. What a life!

### A CAT FIGHT AND A GOLD MEDAL

Cousin Mollie Goff prevailed on me to come to Sparta in January, 1890, and live at her home and attend Andrew Jackson College at that place. This school was conducted by Prof. Joe McMillin, brother of Congressman Benton McMillin. The former was then undertaking to construct buildings for college use, but in this he was not successful. My principal teacher there was Mrs. Mary Hill, mother of Judge L. D. Hill of Sparta, and daughter of "Pap" Carnes, famous for his presidency of Burritt College, where my father and mother had been educated. It was a six months' term school, and my dear Cousin Mollie Goff, suggested I live at her home and attend this school, and this I did.

Cousin Mollie Goff had three other students boarding with her, one of whom we will call Kyle.

Our town Mayor, William H. Magness, Jr., had offered a gold medal to the best declaimer at the closing exercise of our school. I told Kyle that I was going to get Senator Bate's address on the Confederate Soldier, delivered at Memphis in 1876. Kyle said that he had decided to deliver the same address. Both being good friends and rooming together, I suggested, and he agreed, that since neither

## MY STEPMOTHER AND HER FAMILY

of us had the address that the one who first procured it would use it as his declamation and the other would secure another address. I immediately wrote to Col. John P. Hickman, at Nashville, and at once secured the address before Kyle could get it. This angered him very much.

On Monday night before the school closed on Friday, while the four of us were in our room studying, a small cat came in. Kyle, catching the cat, threw it violently against the wall of the room and it cried with pain. Never have I seen such agony as it suffered. Having been told all my life that dumb and especially domestic animals should be treated kindly, I told Kyle what I thought of his brutal treatment and a fist fight ensued. I knocked him over some hickory sticks that laid by the side of the fire place and gave him a good choking. Finally, he dropped his hands and said he would apologize and quit if I would let him up. He then raised up about the time I did and came up with a hickory stick of wood while my hands were down and caught me off my guard and struck me across the forehead. The first notice I had that he had hit me was when the blood came streaming down my face, and this made me angrier and the fight continued and ended to my entire satisfaction. However, I had to have a doctor dress the wound and bandage it.

In the meantime, Kyle had memorized the Bate

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

address and the program had already been made out for the coming exercises by which Kyle was to speak first and I was to follow him, both having the same address. I had, in the meantime, acquainted Prof. McMillin with the agreement between Kyle and myself, but he disregarded my insistence that since Kyle had violated an agreement, I should be first on the program.

I practiced continually on my declamation and wanting to make some difference from the one Kyle delivered, I paraphrased and used Webster's peroration in his famous answer to Hayne. Friday night came. An infection had developed in the cut in my head and the bandage around my head made it appear as if I were wearing a Mohammedan's turban. I delivered my speech, following the address of Kyle, and at the close of the speaking the three judges retired and in a few minutes brought in a unanimous decision that I should have the medal. Of course, Kyle was more infuriated than ever, but this was one of the happiest moments of my life. At least my defense of the cat had been vindicated.

I had made Kyle promise, at the close of our trouble on the previous Monday night, that our differences had ended provided he would keep secret his being the cause of my wearing a bandage. He made the promise but in a few days, I found out



## MY STEPMOTHER AND HER FAMILY

before leaving on Saturday for his home that he had gone to a number of my friends and boasted that he had given me a good whipping. He was too far away for me to renew the contest and I have never since seen him. It may be, therefore, that the result of this fight in defense of a cat brought its reward and resulted in the belief that I could accomplish something in the way of public speaking.

After the "cat fight" when Andrew Jackson college closed I returned to Doyle, where I remained another session of school, after which I returned to Mr. Goff's home at Sparta and acted for a short time as Deputy County Court Clerk.

I had long hoped to study law, but I was not sure I could do so. Wanting to better my financial condition, and having some relatives who constituted a majority of the Common School Board in one of the districts where I had lived, I applied for a job as school teacher. They knew me better than I thought, and unanimously refused me the job. They were charitable in giving as their reason that I was too young, and ever since I have thought how lucky I was that they turned me down.

Judge Goff offered me the job of Deputy County Court Clerk on a salary of \$20. a month, board and washing. Along with this job I also acted as Deputy Clerk & Master, and in the rush season requiring



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

payment of taxes, I also acted as Deputy Trustee, both of which, added to my salary as Deputy County Court Clerk, gave me a fair income.

My stepmother, who was a first cousin of Foster V. Brown, then practicing law at Chattanooga, wrote Mr. Brown in my behalf, as result of which, in March, 1891, I came to Chattanooga to be the stenographer for Clark & Brown, who had a large law practice. I had taken a correspondence course in stenography, and what I had learned about it could have been written on a pin head. I lived at the home of Mr. Brown, and received board and \$20. a month, and I must admit I was overpaid. At the end of three months I longed to be back in White County, and I imagine to the entire satisfaction of my employers I resigned my job and returned to Sparta.

## CHAPTER VI

### LAW STUDENT AND EDITOR



WHEN I returned to Sparta I took up the study of law, had the use of a Caligraph typewriter, and took in a few shekels from that source, fell in love, took in all the dances, was admitted to the Bar, my law license being signed by Judge M. D. Smallman, of McMinnville, and Judge William T. Smith, of Sparta, who in 1910 was to become my law partner in Chattanooga.

There were virtually no requirements in those days for admission to the Bar. Applications were made to some judge who appointed a Board to examine applicants, and on my application made to Judge W. T. Smith, presiding over the Circuit Court at Sparta, he appointed L. D. Smith and T. J. Bradford. The former asked me one question and that was if I could define the distinction between an executory devise and a contingent remainder. I frankly stated I could not define the difference, and in fact had never heard of "such things." Mr. Bradford, who was an old lawyer and was known for his humour, asked me one or two questions that had very little relation to law, and as result of the examination

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

I was recommended for admission, drafted my own license, which, as stated, was signed by Judges Smith and Smallman. I might add there were a number of lawyers present at my examination, and I have always believed the real price of the recommendation of my admission to the Bar was that I should "set-em-up," and of course I did.

My pals at Sparta were two of my schoolmates at Doyle College, D. L. Lansden and his cousin, Frank Fancher. Dick Lansden was then teaching school at Bon Air, and he was also County Superintendent of Public Instruction. There were no secrets in this trio, and we told our joys and our troubles, one to another, but never to the other two at the same time.

Those were happy years. Sister Lillie lived part of the time with Cousin Mollie Goff and part of the time with the family of Uncle Billie Passons, who owned and operated the Central Hotel at Sparta. He had married Aunt Martha Wallace Swafford, my mother's sister. Aunt Martha had first married James Swafford of Pikeville, who was killed at his home near that place at the close of the Civil War.

Uncle James Swafford had been warned that he would be shot on sight, and on the occasion in question he was at home when his house was surrounded. He appreciated the approaching confinement of his wife, Aunt Martha, and not wanting her to witness his murder he kissed her good-bye, jumped from a



window and ran. He was shot in the back and fell mortally wounded in the very sight of his wife, who in an hour or so gave birth to a child. A brave and noble act on his part, and it may be added he was the first Swafford to run from an enemy.

I did considerable reading during this period. Belle-lettres interested me most, the reason being that I had read all that had been published about my hero Henry Grady, and had noticed it was said he had laid the foundation for his eloquent speeches by a study of the classics.

One of the partners of Judge Goff in the practice of law was Ephriam Story, who took the Chattanooga daily Times. This I never failed to read, and soon became its Sparta correspondent. Among other articles I wrote for The Times was one that told of the electricity possessed by a house cat in the home of Esquire Stewart. As the story went, one of his relatives suffered from some type of paralysis. One day while playing with the cat and hugging it to his body he said he felt it electrify his person. He continued to press the cat against his body, all of which improved his condition. The Sunday Times played up this article, under big headlines, and of course this convinced me that I had some ability as a writer.

During this period of four or five months, I wrote and had published in the Sparta Expositor a history of the men of White County who had made their



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

mark in the world. A greater part of this history was from information given me by T. J. Bradford, already mentioned, who had then lived beyond his three score years and ten. There were many pioneers of that section then living, and all were eager to aid me in telling the histories of those who had played their part on the stage of life and had passed on.

### EDITOR FOR A BRIEF TIME

R. P. Baker, publisher of the Sparta Expositor and my boyhood friend, Dr. W. B. Young, took a western trip and were absent several weeks. Mr. Baker asked me to edit his paper during his absence and this I did and I may add, without any compensation whatever.

The typesetter in the Expositor's office was Walter Baker, the son of the publisher. While obtaining news for the first issue, someone with whom I had long been acquainted came from the western part of the county and related a story where it was said a man who had gone to school to my father and who belonged to a prominent family, had gone through a long spell of sickness and in his delirium he was said to have stated that he had killed a man a year or so before that time and had thrown his body in a well near the place where the killing occurred. It was related to me that the people who had heard these delirious mutterings recalled that one of their neighbors, at about the time stated, had suddenly disap-

peared and in a spirit of curiosity some of the friends of the dead man drained this well and brought up a skeleton.

It never occurred to me that there was any danger in publishing these facts, giving the name of the man who had disappeared, and the name of the man who, it was said, had admitted he had committed the offense, and so in the first issue of the paper under my editorship there was published about a column giving these facts. I do not remember the number of subscribers the paper had, but as I recall it had a thousand or more, and it was the duty of the "editor," as well as the "devil" in the office, to fold the papers and address and mail them. I recall very vividly the thrill that I had in seeing some of my writing in print. A few hours after the entire issue had been run off and while I was standing in a corner of the office, which was on the second floor of the building where the newspaper was published, engaged in wrapping and folding the papers, this man came in with an open knife with a blade that looked like it was about six inches long. He knew me very well and stated that someone had just shown him the article referred to and in a spirit of anger stated he wanted to see the blankety-blank that wrote that article. He appeared very much excited—and in looking back on the situation, I think, justly so—but it appeared to me at once that an alibi was the proper

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

way to get out of that situation. I told him as calmly as I could that Mr. Baker had been ill and had to go west for his health. I told him, of course, if Mr. Baker had done him an injury that I was sure he would be glad to correct it and that I would, in fact, correct the story in the very next week's issue. These statements did not altogether satisfy him and he wanted to know how long Mr. Baker would be gone and I told him that the editor was very ill and might not get back at all. Anyway the article was corrected the following week and I never saw this man any more and do not know whether he is living or not.

That experience taught me that a publisher should be very careful what he puts in his newspaper. After that, I had an idea when I was engaged in a political race that there were some other newspapers rather careless in what they publish. Anyway, that episode convinced me that a twenty-one year old boy without any experience should not be editing a newspaper.

### A HEATED JOINT DEBATE

In 1892, I was, along with my other work as deputy county clerk and deputy clerk and master, as heretofore stated, engaged in trying to read law. At the same time, Frank T. Fancher had just been admitted to the Sparta Bar; and at about the same time P. F. Willbanks had come from Cumberland Mountain, near where Pleasant Hill School is located, and he



likewise had been admitted or was studying law preparatory to being admitted to the Bar.

Governor David B. Hill, of New York, was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President, and former President Grover Cleveland, who had been defeated in 1888, was also a candidate, both being from the same state. Tennessee particularly, and the south generally, was supporting Cleveland. All the newspapers that I read were strong advocates of Cleveland's cause and it resulted that Mr. Fancher and Mr. Willbanks and myself were all for the nomination of Cleveland.

Dan Meredith and Thomas Finley, both afterwards to become prominent and successful members of the Bar, were at the time students at Pleasant Hill and they, with another, sent a challenge to Willbanks, Fancher and myself to have a joint debate at the Pleasant Hill School in May of that year. The question to be debated was "Resolved that Hill should be nominated at Chicago, June 22, 1892, in preference to Cleveland." Our opponents chose the negative or the Cleveland side, and if we accepted the invitation we were to speak in behalf of Hill's interest. The challenge was accepted and soon after a "grape-vine message" came to us that we might get some rough treatment on the night of the speaking. My associates and myself held a conference and decided that in line with the fashion in that day that we



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

should take some artillery along to be prepared for any emergency, and we chose two of our Sparta friends, Dick Lansden, who as stated was later to become Chancellor, Justice and then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, and Frank Dibrell, the latter to become later the Comptroller of Tennessee for many years, to carry the necessary "utensils" for defense.

Fancher opened the debate and in his peroration denounced Cleveland as a mug-wump and a bolter of the party and said that anyone who endorsed him was a traitor to the party, whereupon one of our opponents arose, with his hand in his hip pocket and asked Fancher if the statement made referred to this opponent, to which Fancher hesitated a moment and then replied: "I had not thought of applying it to you but if the shoes fit you, yes, I mean you," whereupon one of the friends of the other side jumped to his feet and proceeded to get his pistol out and it looked like there was going to be serious trouble. Everyone began to move about, taking a defensive or offensive position, that is, to run or fight, and about that time a long, gaunt mountaineer, wearing green spectacles, with a shock of red hair and with a red handkerchief around his neck, and the ends of his trousers stuffed in high boots, appeared on the end of the long platform which constituted the stage in the school, and began to push people out of his

way, holding aloft in his right hand a long knife, yelling at the top of his voice, "walk Roxy and let your mother ride." He tried to reach the fellow with the pistol and for a moment the situation appeared more ominous. However, all the auditors and the combatants in unison thought the thing to do was to stop this wild mountaineer, who continued with the same yell every second or so. Finally he was halted and soon the other belligerents calmed down, the thing blew over, and the debate proceeded, all to the delight of the Sparta debaters and the audience.

I have forgotten now what the decision was on the debate, but my recollection is that it was unanimously against our side because it was not only the unpopular side, but our friend with the knife, of course, gave us a set-back, and not only the judges of the debate but the entire audience wanted to get rid of these "furriners" and have them leave the village just as quickly as possible, and this we did after the debate was over.

It developed this Horatio "on the stage" was the brother of our associate Pose Wilbanks. Just what he meant by "Walk, Roxy, and let your mother ride," I have never learned, but I have no doubt this mountaineer intended his scream as a bugle call to war for our defence. At least, the effort prevented what might have developed into a tragedy.

It appeared the outlook for a young lawyer at

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Sparta was not very promising, and one evening while discussing the situation with my friend Dick Lansden I casually mentioned that I would like to return to Chattanooga but was uncertain what to do because of my financial condition. He stated he had \$100 in the bank, and if I needed it he would loan me \$95.

Anticipating that this with what I had would tide me over for a reasonable time, I accepted his offer and again came to Chattanooga "for better or for worse."

## CHAPTER VII

### CHRONOLOGY 1894-1938



RETURNED to Chattanooga February 5, 1894, and during that year was in the office of Clark & Brown, Attorneys.

In 1895 I was in partnership with D. L. Grayson, under the firm name of Grayson & Williams. Our offices were in the Times Building, and just across the hall from Clark & Brown. Our partnership was dissolved at the end of that year, and I returned to the office of Clark & Brown.

On August 6, 1894, United States District Judge D. M. Key, of Chattanooga, resigned his position, and immediately President Cleveland sent to the Senate the name of former Governor James D. Porter, of Paris, to fill the vacancy. On August 17, 1894, the Senate Judiciary Committee made an adverse report because Governor Porter was more than sixty years of age and was not a resident of either of the Districts affected. On December 17, 1894, the name of Charles D. Clark was sent to the Senate, and in the latter part of January, 1895, his appointment was confirmed.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Frank Spurlock took the place of Judge Clark in Mr. Brown's firm, the name being Brown & Spurlock, which has continued to this time. When Foster Vincent Brown passed away in March, 1937, his son, Joseph Brown, former Congressman from the Third Congressional District, continued as a member of that firm.

During the first week of January, 1896, while I was talking one day in Brown & Spurlock's office to Colonel John A. Beasley about a "cow case" we had been litigating, Judge D. L. Snodgrass, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, walked into the office and seeing Colonel Beasley asked if he were the author of an article which had appeared that morning in the Chattanooga Times criticising a decision of Snodgrass on the State Bond Act of 1883. Colonel Beasley replied that he had written the article in question, and after some heated words Snodgrass shot Beasley in the arm, I being the only eye-witness.

Snodgrass was indicted for felonious assault January 9, 1896, tried and acquitted May 21, 1896.

In March, 1896, Judge David B. Hill, of Amorilla, Texas, who with his brothers and sisters had been students of my father at Cumberland Institute, and who was my schoolmate at Doyle College wrote and suggested that I come to Clarendon, Texas, where he had lived, stating there was a good opening for a young lawyer, and that he was sure I could be im-

## CHRONOLOGY 1894-1938

mediately elected County Attorney at that place. I made arrangements to go, and got as far as Memphis when Judge Clark sent me a message to return to Chattanooga, as he had other plans for me. I returned and went into the office first of William T. Murray, in the Richardson Building, where I remained for a few months. At that time U. S. District Attorney James H. Bible, an appointee of President Cleveland, asked me to come into his office, which I did and remained there until the Richardson Building burned April 3, 1897.

In June, 1896, I attended the National Democratic Convention at Chicago, and heard the epochal debate on the Free Silver question in which "The Great Commoner," William Jennings Bryan made his famous Cross of Gold speech.

From August 1, 1896, to November 3 of that year, I was Secretary of the Third Congressional Democratic Committee, having been appointed at a salary of \$75. per month by my good friend Colonel W. M. Nixon who, I am glad to say, is still living and still my good friend.

Through this connection I came in contact with men who were to play a part in my life—William Cummings, who was long to serve the City of Chattanooga in the capacity of City Judge, and the people of Hamilton County as County Judge, for many, many years, and in 1938 is still serving in that ca-

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

capacity; and E. S. Daniels, with whom I later formed a partnership.

In April, 1897, I opened an office in the McConnell Block, of which my friend William Cummings was manager, and since I had no law library, not even a single book and scant furniture, at his own suggestion he purchased a law library for me at an expense of about \$638., for which I gave my note, and he aided me in my law business, and from thence on I had a good practice for a young lawyer. I have never ceased to be grateful to Will Cummings for his kindness and financial assistance at a time when it meant a great deal to me.

On July 5, 1897, Judge Clark appointed me United States Commissioner at Chattanooga, which office I held until May 3, 1905. Having formed a deep affection for Nathan L. Bachman, who was later to become a member of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, and United States Senator, I suggested when I presented my resignation to Judge Clark that he appoint my friend Bachman, which was done and he was immediately sworn into office.

I practiced law by myself from April, 1897, to 1898, when T. C. Latimore and I shared offices, this arrangement continuing until 1902. Our offices at first were in the McConnell Block, then the Miller Building, which had replaced the Richardson Building, and when we separated in 1902 our offices were



## CHRONOLOGY 1894-1938

in the Temple Court Building. Among other cases we had together was the defense of Julia Morrison, leading lady in "Mr. Plaster of Paris," and who, while going on the stage at the Chattanooga Opera House in September, 1899, had shot and killed the leading man, Mr. Leidenhimer. The case attracted national attention. Our client was acquitted January 10, 1900.

My law business increased from year to year.

On February 5, 1902, I married Miss Annie Margaret Scholze, daughter of Robert and Gertrude King Scholze, who had come to Chattanooga in 1870. We first resided at 500 Mabel Street; then at 637 East Fifth Street, where, on December 30, 1902, our first child Robert was born. Mr. Scholze gave to Mrs. Williams the brick residence at 219 McCallie Avenue to which we removed in 1906, where we resided until 1915, when we moved to 726 Dallas Road and resided there until December, 1925, when we removed to our present home, 730 Dallas Road.

In April, 1902, I formed a partnership with E. S. Daniels. He had been District Attorney at Logansport, Indiana, before locating in Chattanooga. He was first a member of the law firm of Moon, Daniels & Garvin, after which he served as City Attorney for two terms, and later as Assistant to M. N. Whitaker, District Attorney-General. Our firm was Daniels & Williams, and we had offices in the McConnell Block



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

until January, 1907, when we removed to the Temple Court Building. Mr. Daniels died in 1909.

I was elected County Attorney in January, 1905, and served until January, 1911.

Our next child, Joe V. Jr., was born March 9, 1906, at 219 McCallie Avenue.

Soon after Mr. Daniel's death in 1909, I formed a partnership with Judge William T. Smith, of Sparta, who had signed my law license, the firm being Williams & Smith. This partnership continued until the early part of 1912, when, on account of illness, Judge Smith retired from the firm and returned to Sparta.

Our third child, Annie Gertrude, was born at 219 McCallie Avenue, September 4, 1910.

In 1909 former Attorney General Judson Harmon introduced me to the United States Supreme Court. He served as Governor of Ohio and in the last administration of Cleveland as Attorney General.

I was temporary Chairman of the Free and Untrammelled Judiciary Convention in May, 1910, and all of our candidates for the Supreme Court and the Court of Civil Appeals were elected by more than 46,000. This was organized by Justice John K. Shields, of Knoxville, then a member of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, who later became United States Senator; Charles T. Cates, Jr., then State Attorney General, and Justice D. L. Lansden.

## CHRONOLOGY 1894-1938

All these men urged me to permit my name to go on the ticket as candidate for the Court of Civil Appeals of Tennessee for the Eastern Division, which I declined to do.

I was also Temporary Chairman of the Democratic State Convention in October, 1910, when Senator Robert Love Taylor was nominated for Governor of Tennessee, but was defeated in the following November election.

While I was serving as County Attorney in January, 1911, County Judge Seth M. Walker died, thus creating a vacancy in that office until the next regular election in August, 1912, the vacancy to be filled by the Quarterly Court. My friend Will Cummings could not be elected by the Court, but I could, and he prevailed on me to allow the Court to elect me to fill the unexpired term and I reluctantly yielded to Cummings' request and was elected by all votes of the Court except two. I was not a candidate for re-election.

I was a candidate for the democratic nomination to Congress in a specially called primary for that office held September 12, 1912, against Congressman John A. Moon, and was defeated by 2616 votes.

When our country entered the World War in 1917, in common with almost every member of the Chattanooga Bar, I gave unstintedly of my time to the public service. In the Liberty Loan drives I had

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

the pleasure of accompanying my old friend Matt Whitaker. Being a natural orator, and having three sons in France, his emotions were stirred, and I never tired of listening to the fine and eloquent addresses he made. While the government offered to pay the expenses of those engaged in this work, General Whitaker and I agreed at the very beginning, and we lived up to this agreement, that we would not allow the government or any one to pay our expenses.

Soon after the declaration of war I enlisted as a private in Company A, 4th Infantry of the National Guard of Tennessee, and in attending the drills I found my friend Col. Milton B. Ochs present, full of pep and enthusiasm.

Our fourth and last child, Margaret Elizabeth, was born at our summer home on Signal Mountain July 17, 1917.

From the time of the dissolution of the firm of Williams & Smith I practiced alone until November, 1913, when I formed a partnership with Frank M. Thompson, who had just been elected Attorney General of Tennessee, and his son Neal L. Thompson, who in April, 1926, was to become a member of the Court of Appeals of Tennessee, Eastern Division. That partnership continued until 1921, when General Thompson removed to Nashville, to carry on the duties of his office.



## CHRONOLOGY 1894-1938

In June, 1924, I was a delegate from the Tennessee State Bar Association to the meeting of the American-British Bar Associations which was held in London, England.

On June 20, 1929, our son Robert married Miss Mary Lawton, to whom a daughter, Margaret Elaine Williams, was born September 24, 1932, and a son, Robert L. Williams, on March 27, 1938. Robert is Assistant Manager of the Southern Saddlery Company at Chattanooga.

In 1931, the Legislative Committee appointed by the Legislature to investigate the financial affairs of the State and some alleged wrong-doing, appointed Robert L. McReynolds, Esq. of Clarksville, and myself as attorneys to aid in the investigation. The first I knew of the matter was the receipt of a message from one of the members of the Committee asking me to serve. We spent three months on this job, and a majority of the Committee recommended impeachment of the State Executive. The investigation developed into a farce, and our hard work, together with the fine service of some members of the Committee resulted in no benefit to the State. The Legislature acquitted the Executive.

In 1931, I formed a partnership with my son, Joe V. Williams, Jr., on his graduation from the law department of Vanderbilt University, under the



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

name of Williams & Williams, which partnership continues in 1938.

In 1933-34 I was president of the Chattanooga Bar Association, and in 1935-36 president of the Bar Association of Tennessee.

Our daughter Gertrude married Charles Marion Gaston, of Toccoa, Georgia, January 2, 1936. They have one child, Margaret Anne, born August 3, 1937. Mr. Gaston is manager and part owner of the Coca Cola Bottling Company of Burlington, Iowa, where they reside.

In 1937 I took an active interest and made numerous addresses and published articles against President Roosevelt's effort to "pack" the Supreme Court. Thanks to those who still believe and have faith in our form of government, the effort was overwhelmingly defeated.

## CHAPTER VIII

### READY TO FACE THE TRIALS COMMON TO ALL YOUNG LAWYERS



AS HERETOFORE stated I returned to Chattanooga February 5, 1894, and was welcomed to the office of Clark & Brown. My acquaintance at Chattanooga was limited to the members of that firm, a schoolmate at Doyle College, who had removed here, and my brother, who had a job as conductor on a street car.

The firm of Clark & Brown was composed of Judge Charles D. Clark, who had been reared in Laurel Cove, Van Buren County, and about nine miles from Hickory Valley, and Foster V. Brown, a distant relative and a native of White County. Both had been educated at Burritt College where my parents had attended school. Judge Clark, when a young man, had often called at grandfather Williams' home to see his daughter Mary. Mr. Brown, his mother and sister had lived at that home a part of the time during the Civil War, and both members of that firm were of course interested in my future.

I remained in their office during 1894, and was able to attend to the small matters that came to the

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

office. Judge Clark had taken a divorce case for a lady, in which I had no part except to hear her relate her woes to her attorney and to my surprise when Judge Clark collected a fee of \$75. he gave me one-half of it. At the same time he said to me that I would have a hard time to get started, and I must keep free of debt; that it was better to owe one rather than many, and if I got in need he would either advance me enough to get along on, or would endorse my note.

The "need" arose in about six months, and with fear and trembling I went to Judge Clark, told him my predicament and asked him to endorse a note for \$50. He did so without hesitancy, and seeing my embarrassment he said, "Remember always to ask for what you want and get what you can." I continued to call on him occasionally, and he never refused.

In November, 1894, Mr. Brown was the Republican nominee for Congress against Henry C. Snodgrass, of Sparta, Democratic nominee, who had been elected in 1892. Judge Clark said to me confidentially during the campaign that if his vote would decide the election he would vote for Brown, but since it appeared the latter would likely be elected he intended to vote for Snodgrass, and suggested that I do likewise, which I did. Mr. Brown, as predicted, was elected.



## READY TO FACE TRIALS COMMON TO ALL LAWYERS

My first law partner, D. L. Grayson, had been educated at George Washington University, while I at that time had only read the History of a Lawsuit, and Parsons on Contracts, and had had no practical experience whatever. Grayson's Annotated Tennessee Code which he published about that time, was a thorough work, and quite valuable to the profession.

I have always been a great admirer of Mr. Grayson, and particularly appreciated his patience with me, and I am delighted that he is still in active practice, and in all the passing years has remained my loyal friend.

General James H. Bible had been reared at Benton, Polk County, Tennessee, and all the time I was in his office he was urging me to remove to Benton, open an office in which he would be interested, and pictured the success I would have. There were two copper companies operating in Polk County, and a large number of industries, and that County then stood fifth in all the counties of Tennessee in its gross tax assessment. I thought seriously of removing to Benton but before I had definitely decided whether I would or not Mr. Bible became suddenly ill and passed away, and I then decided to remain in Chattanooga.

Mr. Bible had his law office in the Richardson Building. It burned April 3, 1897, and my old



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

childhood friend James B. Snodgrass, who was then publishing the Sparta Expositor, had an article in his paper the following week in which it was stated in substance that Joe V. Williams, a former "distinguished citizen" of Sparta, suffered a great loss in the destruction by fire of the Richardson Building at Chattanooga, in that his entire library, consisting of an old Tennessee Code, and an ancient army pistol were destroyed. I wrote Snodgrass that I had dug from the embers of the fire my trusty weapon, and as soon as I could get cap, powder and ball, I would be over and demonstrate that the old weapon could still kick.

In June 1896, I attended the National Democratic Convention at Chicago, and sat just in front of the stage where I heard William Jennings Bryan deliver his famous address on free silver. Governor Robert L. Taylor was there, and had come to Chicago on a railroad pass from Knoxville via Cincinnati. I had a round trip railroad ticket via Nashville. At the close of the convention Senator Taylor told me he had to go to Nashville, and suggested we exchange our transportation. Not knowing, or appreciating, the hazard of the exchange, I gave him my ticket and took his pass. When I got to Somerset, Kentucky, Pete Gorman, a red-headed conductor, took charge of the train. He looked at my pass and then at my youthful face and said, "You are not Robert L.

## READY TO FACE TRIALS COMMON TO ALL LAWYERS

Taylor, are you?" I meekly replied, "That document says I am." "Well," said the conductor, "I am going to wire in, and see who you are, and I am of opinion I will have to throw you off unless you pay a cash fare." I didn't have more than a dollar, and for miles and miles I expected every moment to be kicked off the train, and every time Gorman came into the car I said to myself, "Well, here's where I get off and walk." Nothing happened, however, and ever afterwards I was the loyal friend of Pete Gorman, who had a record of never letting a fellow ride unless he had a valid ticket or paid the necessary fare. I, of course, knew there was at least one exception to the case. At that time it was not a violation of law for one to ride on a pass issued to another.

## CHAPTER IX

### MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN



OPENED an office in the McConnell Building in April, 1897. This ancient building still stands.

My friend, Will Cummings, became deeply interested in me, and began turning business my way, and so in 1898, I made my first appearance in the Supreme Court to argue the three cases I had there pending.

During the year of 1898, Judge Clark called me to his office one day and said he had been offered the privilege of purchasing a \$5000. first mortgage note for \$3600. and suggested that he loan me the \$3600. taking my note therefor. This was done and I made the purchase and later collected the full amount of the note with interest, and paid off my indebtedness. This matter placed me on "Easy Street."

Everything seemed to be coming my way. During that period I went to Childress, Texas, and on the same train out of Memphis was George N. Henson, President of the Citizens Bank & Trust Company of Chattanooga, traveling to Dallas. I introduced my-



## MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN

self to Mr. Henson, and during the whole day we talked and became friends. He asked me to come to his Bank to see him when I returned to Chattanooga, and this I did. He gave me a few accounts owing to C. D. Kenny Tea Company which he stated Mr. Kenny had sent him to be turned over to some young lawyer for collection. I had good luck and collected almost every account.

In a few days Mr. Henson called me to the Bank and said he had received, as he expressed it, "a bushel" of Kenny's accounts for collection. I bought me a bicycle and in the early evenings I would call on the debtors at their homes, had phenomenal luck, and collected nearly every account without bringing a single suit—nor did I make a single enemy, so far as I know. One day Mr. Henson called me to his bank and showed me a letter from Mr. Kenny in which he said if he "had a young lawyer in every City in the United States like that young fellow Williams," he could "lie down at night and rest in ease." That letter gave me new hope.

I have remembered the thoughtfulness of Mr. Kenny in making that statement, and it has always been an inspiration to me, and the fact that a busy man like Mr. Henson took the trouble to tell me of the letter was greatly appreciated.

In the practice of law I have been a free lance—



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

that is, I have not confined my practice to any particular branch of litigation.

During the years I was County Attorney of Hamilton County that representation necessarily involved municipal law, and the knowledge that came to me from that experience has been of great help in my general practice.

After I formed my partnership with General Thompson in 1913, our practice was largely corporation practice, which I inherited on our dissolution.

I have had very little practice in the criminal courts, although I participated in some half dozen or so important criminal cases. As far as possible I have avoided that type of practice.

### REFERENCE TO OUR LOCAL JUDICIARY AND BAR

In Chattanooga we have always been blessed with a fine judiciary. When I came to Chattanooga John A. Moon was Circuit Judge, and known for his ability, fearlessness and integrity. Our Chancellor was T. M. McConnell, one of the outstanding equity judges in Tennessee. Floyd Estill succeeded Judge Moon, and for real ability and learning I doubt if Tennessee has produced a man who surpassed him as a circuit judge.

Chancellor McConnell was succeeded by a dear friend of mine, Walter B. Garvin, who reached the top of equity judges. He was succeeded by my close

## MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN

friend J. Lon Foust, who had offices near mine in the Hamilton National Bank Building for many years, during which time we saw each other daily. He has made an able successor to his predecessors, and has carried on their traditions.

Judge Estill was succeeded by one of the warmest friends I have ever had, M. M. Allison, who, without much experience but with a great deal of native ability came to be known as one of the leading circuit judges of Tennessee.

My good friend Nathan Bachman served as circuit judge until promoted to the Supreme Bench of Tennessee, which office he resigned to become a candidate for the nomination for United States Senator, in 1924. He was defeated, but later was appointed to that high office and then elected by the people, which office he held at the time of his death in 1937. He made an outstanding record as a judge.

When Judge Bachman went on the Supreme Bench, in 1918, he was succeeded by my long-time friend Oscar Yarnell, who has since been our Circuit Judge. He has been a fearless, painstaking official, very popular with the Bar, and has made a splendid record; I doubt if any judge in Tennessee has a better one.

My personal friend Matt N. Whitaker served as District Attorney-General during my first years in Chattanooga, and made a memorable record in that

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

office. Later he served for a short time as Criminal Judge, and I might add that in all political campaigns Matt and I were aligned and campaigned together, and when the drive was on for the sale of Liberty Bonds during the World War he and I were paired, and those who know the geniality and companionship of Matt Whitaker know what a delight it is to be with him.

In 1903 Sam D. McReynolds was appointed Judge of our Criminal Court, and was then elected from time to time and served until 1922, when he was elected to Congress, where he still remains. He is Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House, which of itself is a great honor. He came to Chattanooga about the same time I did, and from thence on I have had the deepest affection for him. I remember in 1922, before announcing his candidacy for Congress, he came to me and stated that since I had been an unsuccessful candidate for the nomination, he was for me if I wanted to run. I appreciated this deeply, but wisely decided to stick to the law, and it has been a great pleasure to support one so generous.

The younger generation of lawyers has been well represented in our courts by Judges Charles W. Lusk and L. D. Miller. Both have made splendid records, are popular and well liked by the Bar and



## MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN

the people. As stated, my practice in their courts has been limited.

We have been most fortunate in the personnel of our appellate courts. The late Fairfax Harrison, president of the Southern Railway System, stated that in ability and learning the members of our present State Supreme Court rank with those of the highest courts of the country. And I want to add that that particularly applies to our local member, Mr. Justice Alexander W. Chambliss, who has been my friend from the date of our meeting in the early days of my coming to Chattanooga. While the closing chapters of this book are being prepared Justice Chambliss, I am happy to state, has displayed another evidence of his generosity and interest in the welfare of Chattanooga and its charitable organizations by giving to the Salvation Army of Chattanooga the sum of \$10,000. to lift a mortgage on its local home. This is but in keeping with other large gifts he has made for the benefit of charitable and religious organizations here.

Space forbids my mentioning more than a few of my intimate friends at the Chattanooga Bar; however, I cannot let the opportunity pass without naming some of those with whom I have been closely associated.

One of my earliest acquaintances was Colonel



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Robert Pritchard, who for years gave me advice and took an interest in my welfare. I remember in one of his talks he told me to never walk slowly on the street, but to appear to be in a hurry, and said: "If you can, always carry a law book." I shall always remember his kindness and the encouragement he gave me. His partner, J. B. Sizer, has long been my friend, and, I might state, my ideal type of lawyer.

Another dear friend who recently passed on was John H. Cantrell. He was a learned and delightful conversationalist, and came to my office every few days for a friendly chat. He was a thorough Shakespearean scholar, and believed as I do in the doctrine of retributive justice. Just a few years before his death he published an article he prepared from the writings of Shakespeare, showing the sufferings and torments of those who had committed wrongs against others, which, doubtless, helped establish his belief in that doctrine.

Among other lawyers whose association has meant much to me are J. J. Lynch, Judge Floyd Estill, Frank Spurlock, R. B. Cooke, J. B. Milligan, T. Pope Shepherd, E. D. Bass, W. B. Miller, J. W. Anderson, Martin A. Fleming, J. Lon Foust, Nathan Bachman, Col. Ed Watkins, Charles C. Moore, and B. E. Tatum. The minds of these men ran along different channels, but all were interested as I was in the topics of the day and matters of history.

## MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN

I had a close association for years with the late Senator James B. Frazier. We had the same views politically, and often discussed governmental affairs, and to my mind there was no man in Tennessee better qualified to speak on that subject than he.

Lawyers of the older school I especially recall include L. M. Coleman, Jesse M. Littleton, Judge Lewis Shepherd, George D. Lancaster, D. L. Snodgrass, W. G. M. Thomas, W. D. Spears, W. T. Murray, and T. H. Cooke.

While I am only mentioning the older members of the Bar, I am compelled to include my devoted and loyal friend Sam H. Ford, who came to Chattanooga about the time I did, without acquaintances and without any worldly goods, but who through tireless effort, real ability and a happy faculty for making friends has built up a large practice, and has accumulated a modest fortune.

I had occasion to know that W. B. Miller was a great lawyer. For many years it seemed he was my adversary in almost every important case I had, and when this occurred I made special preparations because I knew the opposite side would be ably and loyally represented. Mr. Miller's two chief characteristics were, first, he knew how to shape up his pleadings, and second, all who knew him knew he valiantly fought to win the cause of each client. In his latter years we forgot our battles and became and

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

remained the warmest of friends. And I may add that the brilliant mind of the father has been inherited by my young friend, his son Vaughn Miller.

In naming the above lawyers I have not referred to more than two score of the younger members of the Bar who are coming to the front in their profession and who are my personal friends. They are fast taking the place of the older lawyers, and I am sure when the time comes to write something of them in an historical way it will be said that they upheld the best traditions of the older members, and that the tribute of the late Chief Justice W. D. Beard, in stating that Chattanooga always had one of the ablest Bars in the State, may be truly said of them.

Many of my dear friends have gone to their reward, and those who still live are too numerous to mention in these pages.

One of the rich rewards of going into politics for the brief period I did was the host of friends I made, not only in Hamilton County but in the counties constituting the Third Congressional District. In 1912 in my campaign I recall I received 1285 votes in my old home County of White, there being only 81 votes cast against me.

In this connection I want to say that in campaigning in this Congressional District I doubt if I visited a community where the late beloved John A.



## MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN

Patten had not rendered substantial financial aid to its churches, schools and other institutions.

### FEDERAL JUDICIARY

When I came to Chattanooga D. M. Key, former Postmaster General, was United States District Judge. The only recollection I have of him was that in acting as messenger boy for the firm of Clark & Brown and going to his home or office with a bill for fiat for injunction, which I did on numerous occasions, I always found him pleasant and courteous.

As stated, Judge Key was succeeded by Judge Clark, in January, 1895. He served until his death in the summer of 1909, when E. T. Sanford, of Knoxville, then Assistant Attorney-General at Washington, was appointed to succeed Judge Clark.

I had known Judge Sanford because I had been appointed by Judge Clark in 1899 as Special Master to fix the attorney fees in litigation involving the liquidation of the Marietta and North Georgia Railroad Company. There was a strenuous contest about this compensation, and I recall Judge Sanford's firm was allowed \$25,000., and the other firm who made claim to the representation of the creditors was allowed \$2500.

Judge Sanford's distinguished service was rewarded by appointment to the Supreme Court of the



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

United States, and his successor was Zenophon Hicks, who had long been Circuit Judge in the Clinton, Tennessee, District.

I have never known a finer, more modest gentleman than Judge Hicks. When he applied for a position on the Circuit Court of Appeals, at Cincinnati, I had the honor of being Chairman of a delegation of twenty-three lawyers who went to Washington to present the application to Attorney-General Sargent. Judge Hicks was appointed to the position of Circuit Judge by President Coolidge. He is known for his able but brief opinions.

Judge Hicks was succeeded by George C. Taylor, our present District Judge. It goes without saying that he has upheld the traditions of his distinguished predecessors. By his ability and fairness in dealing with lawyers and litigants he has endeared himself to all.

I have had some practice in the court of Federal Judge John J. Gore, of Nashville, and a more human judicial official never lived. He is making a fine record.

Many have thought federal judges austere and that they are too much inclined to hold themselves aloof from the general run of humanity. Certainly such a thought does not apply to the judges I have mentioned, and candor compels me to state that when I have appeared in the courts of Judges Clark, Hicks,

## MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN

Taylor and Gore I felt that I was in a friendly atmosphere, and among fellow men.

Chattanooga has been blessed with a high type of Referees in Bankruptcy, including D. L. Grayson, already mentioned, always known for his scholarly attainments, his successor James H. Anderson, quite awhile my roommate and always my friend, and the present Referee, the genial Sam J. McAllester, who has made a marked success in the practice of law and is known for his cooperation and friendly feelings for the younger members of the Bar.

### MY BANKER FRIENDS

I am one of those who disagree with the oft-expressed thought that Bankers are not warm-blooded men. Among my early banker friends at Chattanooga was Captain C. A. Lyerly, who often befriended me, and remained my friend until his passing, in 1925. That was also true of the late George N. Henson, heretofore mentioned, and who had associated with him two young fellows, Herbert Bushnell and J. B. F. Lowry, who accommodated me for years, and both of whom threw me considerable business. Others were W. A. Sadd, W. H. DeWitt, and the late R. W. Barr.

I have also been glad to number among my banker friends Thomas R. Preston and Charles M. Preston. In my opinion T. R. Preston, for ability and knowl-

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

edge of finance, should be Secretary of the Treasury of the United States.

Another banker I am proud to number among my warm friends is E. Y. Chapin, Sr., a practicing attorney until he went into the banking business. Mr. Chapin has given unstintedly of his time and means toward the betterment of Chattanooga and its cultural and charitable institutions, and is an outstanding citizen.

Z. C. Patten, president of the Commercial National Bank, is our youngest bank executive. His friends are legion, and he bears a name that is symbolic in this community for integrity and honor.

### CHURCH AFFILIATIONS

From the time I came to Chattanooga the names of Reverends Jonathan W. Bachman and Thomas S. McCallie stood for the best in Church life and morals in this community.

The members of their congregations and the public at large followed their leadership in religious and civic undertakings.

Dr. Bachman, until his death, was the "Pastor of Chattanooga" by virtue of municipal ordinance, and upon his death this honor fell to Dr. McCallie, who passed away in 1937.

For many years our family resided next door to Dr. Bachman. He was our pastor at The First



## MY HORIZON BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN

Presbyterian Church, and we knew and admired him not only because of his teachings but for his lovable disposition and neighborliness.

No man, rich or poor, ever sought aid of either of these two men in vain. They emulated the life of the lowly Nazarene, and by their lives the citizenry of Chattanooga was blessed beyond expression.

The mantle of these two great men has fallen on the shoulders of Reverend J. L. Fowle, pastor of The First Presbyterian Church, and he has nobly maintained the traditions of his predecessors.

I think it appropriate at this place to express what I know is uppermost in the minds of every one in Chattanooga with reference to Dr. Alexander Guerry, and that is that in reviving and reestablishing the University of Chattanooga and making it a cultural center as well as a great school he has rendered a distinct service to this section and the entire South.



## CHAPTER X

### OUR CHILDREN



TO WRITE of one's children, the writer must, of course, write about personalities that are dear to him. That which shall here be written will be more of a tribute than of an historical nature.

In the rearing of our children there has been an absolute spirit of cooperation on the part of their parents. Both, from the birth of our first child, have believed that the home life of a child should be made pleasant and attractive, and to accomplish this our children were permitted to romp and play at their will. Scolding and fault finding by either parent was never a part of our curriculum.

All our children were taught that all labor is honorable. Both Robert and Joe V. sold magazines, especially to the soldiers when camped at Fort Oglethorpe. They gardened and raised vegetables and, having a pony and wagon, took great delight in peddling their wares in our community. During the World War Joe V. sold his billy goat and purchased two Duroc pigs from which about 100 of the finest hogs I have ever seen were raised. As a youngster he



MRS. JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS AT AGE OF ONE YEAR



MRS. WILLIAMS





MRS. WILLIAMS AND SONS, ROBERT AND JOE V., JR.





JOE V., JR., ROBERT AND GERTRUDE WILLIAMS



MARGARET ELIZABETH WILLIAMS



MARGARET ELIZABETH WILLIAMS





GERTRUDE WILLIAMS GASTON AND DAUGHTER, PEGGY ANNE





JOE V. WILLIAMS, JR.



ROBERT S. WILLIAMS



OUR GRANDDAUGHTER, MARGARET ELAINE WILLIAMS





PEGGY ANNE GASTON  
Eleven Months of Age



ROBERT L. WILLIAMS  
Three Months of Age

OUR GRANDCHILDREN





## OUR CHILDREN

attended all agricultural meetings held at the Court House.

From the time each of the boys was five they went to the City market and purchased our groceries and ran all necessary errands. Their mother, when they and their sisters reached that age, read to them all newspaper articles detailing traffic accidents and explained the danger of crossing busy streets. In 1906 Uncle Billie Glenn and wife, Aunt Josie, of Childress, Texas, paid us a visit. This was a short time before Joe V. was born, and Robert piloted our visitors to the mountains and Missionary Ridge, and other points of interest.

When Robert, our first child, was old enough to go to school, Mrs. Williams and I agreed that we would never make any criticism of any of his teachers, or the teachers of any other child that might be born to us, and we lived up to this to the letter.

I had heard my father state that one of the most difficult things he had to combat as a school teacher was lack of cooperation of parents, and especially a parent who listened favorably to the complaint of a student who had been disciplined in school. This rule which we adopted with all of our children was the primary reason that the question of discipline in school and at home never caused us the slightest worry.

We also decided all our children should for a cer-

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

tain period attend the public schools. In my opinion, a child educated altogether in private schools misses a lot in growing up in ignorance of the privations suffered by a majority of our boys and girls who are seeking an education. From public schools come most of the men and women who succeed in life. Private schools play their part, but, admittedly, if a child has never attended a public school he is not ordinarily a well rounded man or woman.

When each of our children reached the age of six their mother proposed if they would abstain from smoking or drinking intoxicants until they reached the age of twenty-one she would give to each \$1000. I am happy to state that each child earned the reward on reaching twenty-one, and since neither formed such habits before reaching that age, we have never worried that either would form such habits.

All our children have been given a good education. Robert, who is now Assistant Manager of the Southern Saddlery Company at Chattanooga, specialized in chemistry. He also specialized in the manufacture of leather, a liking for which he had inherited from his maternal grandfather, but an ambition he never had an opportunity to gratify on account of the untimely death of his grandfather.

After attending the public schools for a period of six years Robert became a student at Baylor Preparatory school in Chattanooga, where he was gradu-

## OUR CHILDREN

ated, and in 1920-21 attended Georgia School of Technology. In 1921-22 he studied at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, at Boston. At the close of his last term there and before he returned home for the Christmas holidays, he visited a friend who was sick and later developed diphtheria. When Robert came home we found this contact had given to him the disease, as result of which he had to cease his studies for a period of one year, and live in the open air. He was, therefore, unable to finish his course at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, but spent two years at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York, 1923-24, where he was graduated.

Joe V., after attending public schools for six years, went to Baylor Preparatory School at Chattanooga three years, and then for four years attended Webb School at Bellbuckle, Tennessee, where he was graduated in June, 1925.

He became interested in public speaking at Webb, and was awarded the prize, a set of Harvard Classics, on delivering a declamation on General Robert E. Lee. During his last year at Webb he was president of the Honor Committee. This system was highly praised by Woodrow Wilson when President of Princeton University.

Joe V. entered Vanderbilt University at Nashville in the fall of 1925, and received his A.B. degree in the class of 1929. In the summer of that year he



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

entered the law school of Vanderbilt University, and continued his studies. In February, 1931, he took the State Bar examination and received a license to practice law. He continued his course and was graduated and received his L.L.B. degree in September, 1931.

At Vanderbilt in 1930 he entered an oratorical contest and won one of the highest honors of that great school, the Founder's medal. The year before he was selected as the State's representative to go to Greenville, South Carolina, and compete in the oratorical contest of seven Southern States, and was selected as alternate to compete in the national contest to be held in San Francisco. He also won the Frank K. Huston prize at Vanderbilt.

Knowing his experience as President of the Honor Committee at Webb's, Joe V. was selected to serve in the same capacity at Vanderbilt, and with a view of improving the system at Vanderbilt he visited Washington & Lee University and other schools to investigate their Honor Systems. As result of this investigation he prepared a new Code of Honor which is now in use at Vanderbilt. He also organized a court to operate in connection with the Honor system.

In May, 1938, Joe V. was elected President of the Chattanooga Bar Association, and also elected President of the Chattanooga Civitan Club.

## OUR CHILDREN

Gertrude spent six years in the public schools, after which she became a pupil of Girls Preparatory School at Chattanooga, which has long been operated by two notable and outstanding women of the South, Miss Tommie Duffy and Miss Eula Jarnigan.

Gertrude was graduated at that school in 1928 and then went to Emerson College, at Boston, and specialized in speech and dramatics, where she was graduated with honors in 1932. The Emerson College News of February, 1932, published her picture at the head of an article of which the following are the first two paragraphs:

“Outstanding work in child psychology has won for an Emerson Senior, Gertrude Williams, of Tennessee, a position on the Child Guidance Staff of the Boston Psychopathic Hospital, a place rarely held by any except social workers of long experience.

“Miss Williams’ exceptional aptitude in the Psychology courses at Emerson under Mr. Harry Kozol attracted the attention of the instructor. At his instigation she took up outside reading in the subject during the Summer recess and this Fall he recommended her for special child guidance work at the Psychopathic Hospital. An assistant was needed to study the children under observation while at play and report to the physician in charge of each case.”

After returning from Emerson College, Gertrude

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

entered the Junaluska Summer Camp at Junaluska, N. C., as one of the councilors where she was appointed to chaperone nine young girls on a trip through Canada and the western coast. During the trip she wrote for the Sunday issues of the Chattanooga Times a series of articles describing her trip, in which she showed marked ability for her descriptive powers. Her Aunt Nell (Mrs. Cole) long insisted that Gertrude should study journalism and become a writer.

After her graduation at Emerson and her return to her home she took a great interest in religious work as a member of the First Presbyterian Church. She gave numbers of readings and made numerous addresses before church and other organizations in Chattanooga, and did quite a bit of radio broadcasting with great success.

Margaret, our youngest child, was called "Friday," by my old friend General Matt Whitaker, because in her early years she was my constant companion. She would remain at home with me when other members of the family would be away, and her pet nickname suggested the constancy of Robinson Crusoe's companion on his lonely island.

Margaret, after her term in the public schools, also became a student at Girls Preparatory School, 1926 to 1931, and then spent one year at Dana Hall, Wellesley, Massachusetts, where she was graduated



## OUR CHILDREN

in 1932. She then spent two years at Wellesley College, but desiring a business training in secretarial work, she entered Katharine Gibbs Secretarial School at Boston, remained there two years, and was graduated in 1936. On Margaret's graduation she secured a position in New York with the Personality Decorating Company, where she remained for some time, and then resigned and returned home.

At the 1937 Roosevelt Ball held in the Auditorium at Chattanooga, Margaret was selected as the Queen and as representing the Spirit of Chattanooga.

Both Gertrude and Margaret are members of the Junior League of Chattanooga, and from a personal observation of the services rendered by the members I have come to know that the organization is a most important one for general welfare work. They are also members of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

We are proud of all our children. They are members of the First Presbyterian Church, and neither one has ever given their parents the slightest anxiety. The writer unhesitatingly states that their mother is entitled largely to the credit for their development. Her patient, constant care and devotion to them has never wavered, and whatever praise is due for their training goes to her.

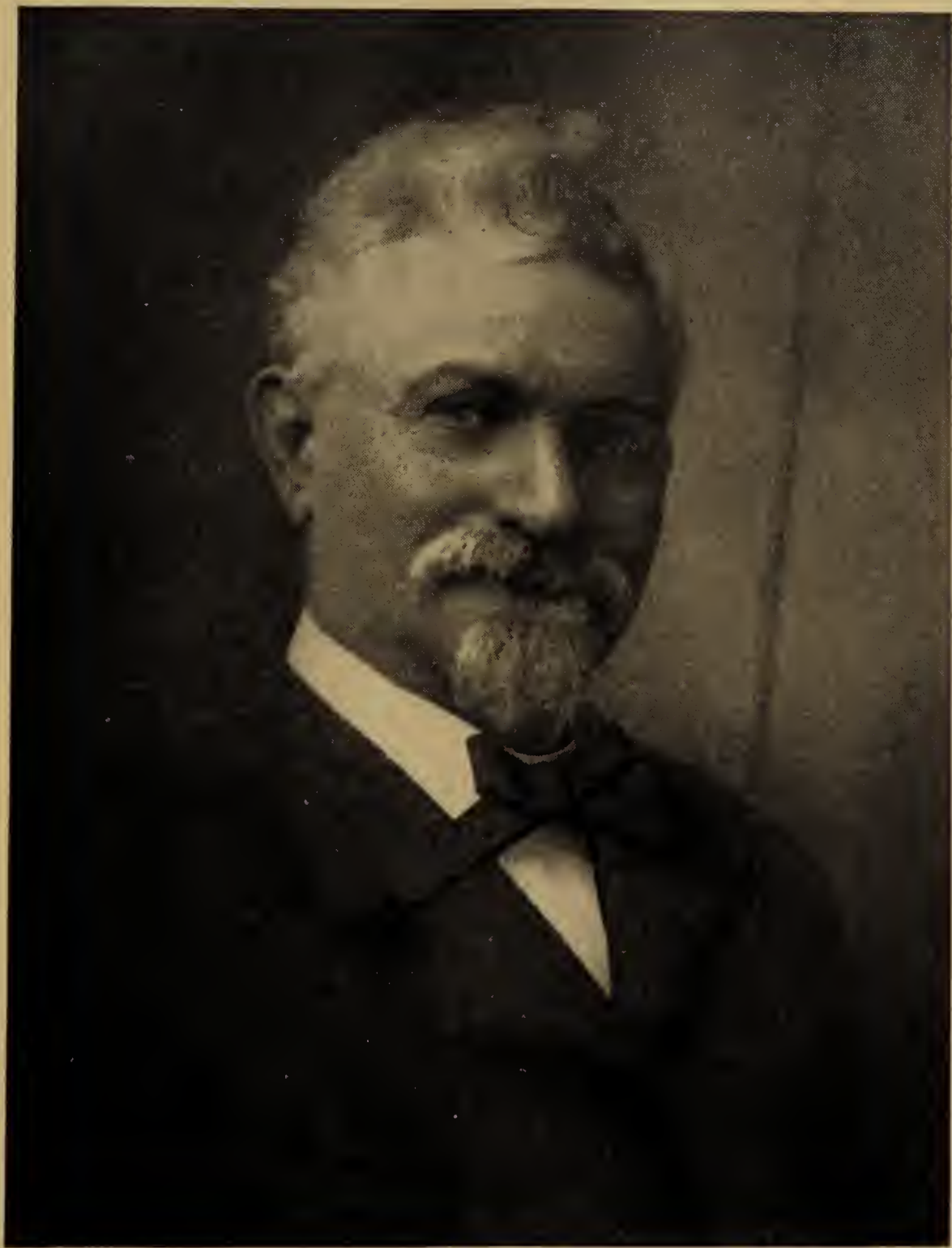


## CHAPTER XI

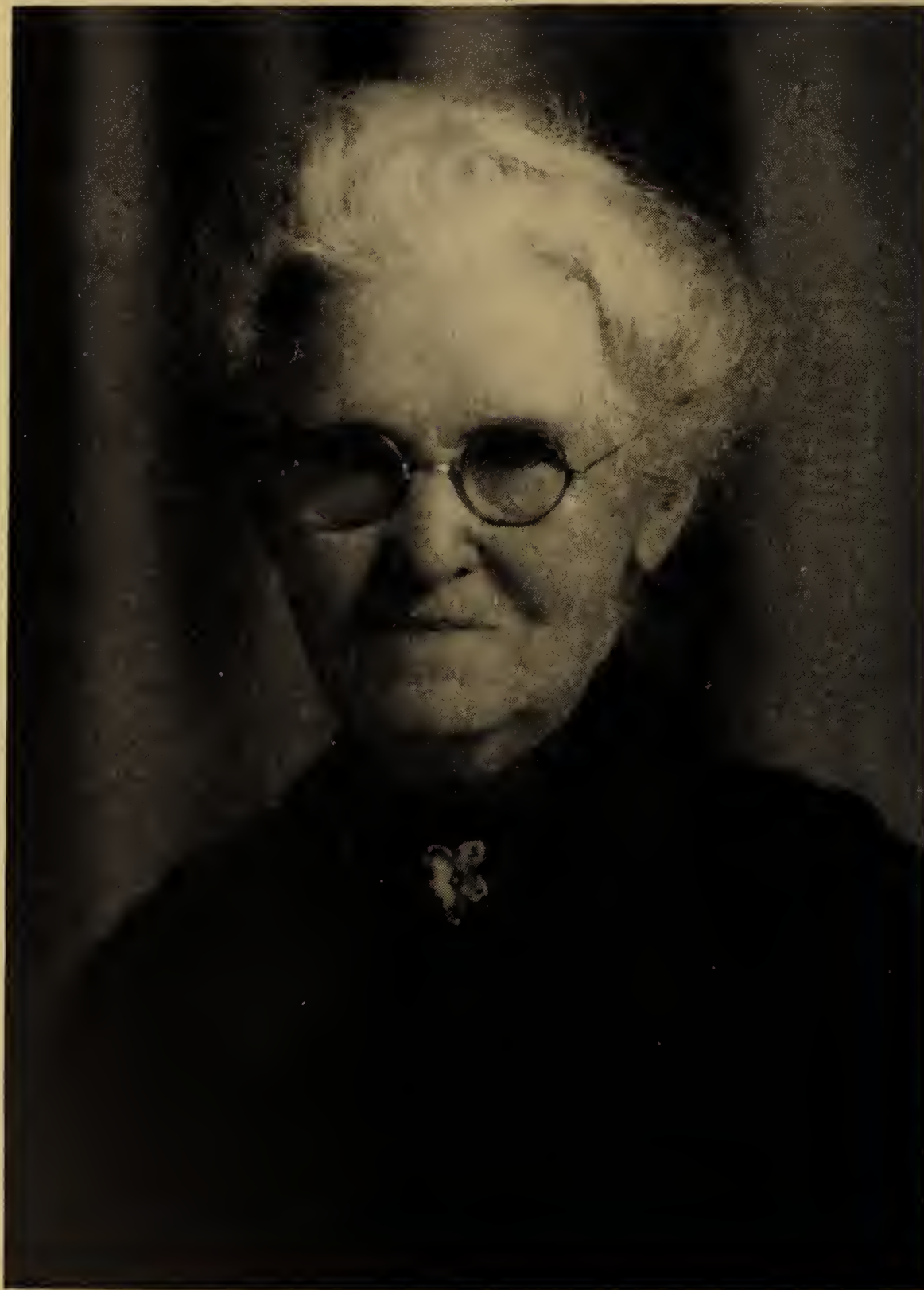
### MY WIFE'S FAMILY



RS. WILLIAMS is the daughter of Robert Scholze and Gertrude King Scholze, who came from Pennsylvania to Chattanooga immediately after their marriage in Pittsburgh, June 13, 1870. Mr. Scholze was born in Saxony, Germany, December 2, 1843, and his wife was born in Hebel Kurhessen, Germany, May 9, 1846. Mr. Scholze emigrated to the United States in 1860 and the family of Mrs. Scholze came in the latter part of 1846. On their coming to Tennessee, Mr. and Mrs. Scholze purchased a farm at Blowing Springs, just below the Georgia and Tennessee line, where for three years they operated a dairy. In 1873, Mr. Scholze, with very little capital, established a small tannery in St. Elmo, and I have heard him state that for some time he was compelled to carry water in buckets from the Chattanooga Creek near by to fill the vats of the tannery. The business prospered, later on several buildings were erected and he employed a large number of men to aid him in the operation. He also established the Southern Saddlery



ROBERT SCHOLZE



MRS. GERTRUDE K. SCHOLZE





MRS. NELL S. COLE





## MY WIFE'S FAMILY

Company, Chattanooga Packing & Ice Company, and one or two other plants of minor nature.

While driving from his home in St. Elmo on April 7, 1907, the horse he was driving ran away. He was thrown against a telegraph pole and fatally injured and died in a few hours.

His widow survived him until June 6, 1937, when she died at our home, 730 Dallas Road.

Her youngest daughter, Mrs. Nell Cole, died January 13, 1932. She was the widow of Captain F. W. Cole, who served in the Spanish-American War. Both are at rest in the National Cemetery at Chattanooga.

The children born to Mr. and Mrs. Scholze were Alfred J. and G. E., sons, and Mrs. Williams, Mrs. S. P. Long and Mrs. Cole, daughters. Mr. Scholze's sister, Mrs. Clara Hamill, is still living and resides with her daughter, Mrs. Kate McGrail, at Chattanooga.

Nell was one of the most beautiful and lovable characters I have ever known. As one of her executors I found in winding up her estate that she had contributed largely to charity that was unknown to the world. Captain Cole died May 22, 1924, and soon thereafter Mrs. Cole developed a throat trouble which confined her to her home, except for two trips to Arizona, until the time of her death. She was

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

especially devoted to her niece Miss Hildagarde Scholze, whose beauty and charm attracted every one, and when this niece died, in July, 1931, it grieved Mrs. Cole very deeply, and perhaps hastened her death.

Mrs. Cole in her will gave the ground and buildings at Twentieth and Broad Streets in Chattanooga, known as the Cole Engineering Company property, to Pine Breeze Tubercular Sanitarium. This legacy brought the author in close touch with E. Y. Chapin, Sr., who has looked after these properties for the Sanitarium.

After the death of Mrs. Cole, Mrs. Scholze came to our home to reside, and except for brief visits to her daughter Mrs. Long, and a few weeks each winter spent with her son Alfred, at Miami, Florida, remained with us until she passed away. During the years she made her home with us she was considerate and thoughtful of every member of the family, and I have never known a more agreeable, patient woman.

Mr. and Mrs. Scholze were members of the First Presbyterian Church at Chattanooga, and in an article published in the magazine section of the Chattanooga Times August 16, 1936, by Miss Zella Armstrong, detailing the life and service of Mrs. Scholze, the following is the opening paragraph relating the life of this remarkable woman:

## MY WIFE'S FAMILY

“Mrs. Robert Scholze, with nine decades in her garden of memories, has proved her affection for her adopted city by generous gifts. The orphans of this vicinity have her to thank for a beautiful summer home on Walden's ridge, where they romp in sunshine and the shadow of lofty trees throughout the warm months without knowledge of how high the mercury climbs in July and August on city streets.”

After Mr. Scholze's death in 1907, I never represented any of the businesses he had established. However, when the Robert Scholze Tannery plant was destroyed by fire May 30, 1930, I was asked by Mrs. Cole, to look after her interest, and at a Directors' meeting of that Company, when its affairs were wound up, I drew a Resolution which was adopted by the Board of Directors and which I believed truthfully reflected the sentiment of all who knew Mrs. Scholze. Part of that Resolution was as follows:

“The Robert Scholze Tannery was founded in 1873, by Robert Scholze. Its founder started with no assets except a willingness to work and to accomplish. By his self denial, sacrifice, frugality and indefatigable attention, the business developed into one of considerable proportions, when on April 7, 1907, in a fatal accident, he lost his life.

“Since the old organization will now be succeeded by a new one, we cannot let this oppor



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

tunity pass without expressing to our Mother our gratitude for the assistance she has given both to the corporation and to ourselves. She has indeed been a loving Mother to us, and a devoted Grandmother to our children. She has set for us an example of honor and faithfulness; she has counseled us to be charitable and honorable; and has taught us that honest labor has its just reward, and that a good name is to be coveted more than riches.

“If we have failed to profit by the noble example she has set for us, the fault is with us and not her. She has given to us and to the world her best.”

Both Robert Scholze and his wife are buried in Forest Hills Cemetery, at Chattanooga.

## CHAPTER XII

### SOME OF MY PREFERENCES

“The strongest principle of growth lies in human choice.” George Eliot.



ORNBREAD is the only bread for which there is any justification.

Of all the games I ever played,—marbles, bull-pen, ante-over, wrestling, town ball, foot-ball, base-ball—I enjoyed most playing marbles. It was one game in which I laid claim to championship.

The greatest text for a sermon is: “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” John, 18:37.

Nathan’s parable is to me one of the most significant of all the parables in the Bible. II Samuel, Ch. 12.

The greatest low tariff speech I have ever read is found in Shakespeare’s “Julius Caesar,” where Brutus, in addressing Cassius, said:

“I did send to you  
For certain sums of gold, which you denied me,  
For I can raise no money by vile means.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

By Heaven! I had rather coin my heart  
And drop my blood for drachmas than to wring  
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash  
By any indirection."

I agree with Ingersoll that the greatest sentence in all English writings is in Shakespeare's 116th. Sonnet, where it is said—"Love is not love, which alters when it alteration finds."

It is my opinion that the most beautiful tribute ever paid to a church was the tribute of Lord Macaulay, the great English historian and a Protestant, who, in speaking of the Catholic Church, said:

"She was great and respected before the Saxon had sat foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

In Swinburne's "England," he paid the most beautiful poetical tribute to his country I have ever heard expressed:

"All our past proclaims our future;  
Shakespeare's voice and Nelson's hand,  
Milton's faith and Wordsworth's trust

## SOME OF MY PREFERENCES

In this our chosen and chainless land  
Bear us witness: Come the world against her  
England yet shall stand."

My prayer is that that prophecy may be fulfilled. Without England and our country the Democracies of the world may be swallowed up by the ruling Dictators of this day.

Witness the brutalities of the Monster who now rules Germany, and who has just completed the rape of Austria.

The most beautiful epitaph is on the monument to Sidney Lanier, the South's beloved poet:

"Night slipped to dawn, and pain merged into  
beauty,  
Bright grew the road his weary feet had trod;  
He gave his salutation to the morning  
And found himself before the face of God."

The most beautiful language in all the opinions of the Supreme Court of Tennessee is that of the late Justice David L. Snodgrass, in the *J. I. Case Co., v. Joyce*, 89 Tenn. Report, 347, wherein it was held that a homestead does not attach to undivided interests in lands; and the greatest expression for the necessity of the independence of courts if this government survives was that given by the same jurist in his famous dissenting opinion in the *Judges Cases*, 102 Tenn. Report, 596.

My favorite orator is Henry W. Grady. The



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

speech that did more than any other one thing to reunite the South and the North after the Civil War was his address before the New England Society in New York City; that speech made him famous.

Just a few months before Mr. Grady died, in December, 1889, I wrote to him and asked for a copy of that famous speech, and in response he sent me one hundred printed copies of all his addresses, accompanied by a personal letter. Reading those addresses gave me an inspiration that has lasted all through the years of my life.

The most sincere and feeling tribute I ever heard paid to a man on his passing was that of a youth from Cumberland Mountain when the word came in December, 1889, to our little college that Henry Grady had died. The boy broke down and cried and exclaimed, "Boys, I would have willingly given my life that Henry Grady might have lived!"

The greatest all-round lawyer I have ever known was the late Foster V. Brown; and the greatest lay-philosopher I have ever known was his partner, Frank Spurlock, also one of the South's great lawyers. And in this class of great lawyers I place my former partner, General Frank M. Thompson, who, with very little schooling, rose to the top of his profession.

The greatest "rough and tumble" lawyer I have known was the late Attorney-General L. D. Smith,

## SOME OF MY PREFERENCES

who also very properly belongs in the class of our great lawyers.

Of all the men I have known, the late Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of Tennessee—William D. Beard and D. L. Lansden—possessed the greatest power of expression.

The most beautiful and feeling plea for mercy I ever heard was made by my daughter Gertrude when she was four years of age. In the summer of 1914, while living on Signal Mountain, a little mountain girl, Midgy Rank, often came to our home to play with Gertrude. Midgy constantly had her thumb in her mouth, and one day, in an effort to cure her of this habit, I called to Gertrude to bring me the scissors with the statement I intended to cut off Midgy's thumb. During the following winter, while Gertrude was sleeping with me one night, she suddenly and gently patted my face and said "Daddy, I want to ask a favor," to which I replied, "Why, darling, I will do anything you ask." She cuddled closer to me, and placing her little arm around me she said: "Daddy, last summer you said you were going to cut off Midgy's thumb. Please don't because she's a poor little mountain girl, and you ought not to hurt her." Of course I solemnly promised—and who wouldn't?

Since I have no recollection of my Mother, the greatest mother I have ever known is my wife, and

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

her constancy, and her devotion to her children are reflected in their constant love and devotion to her.

The most forgiving client I ever represented was a little ragged boy thirteen years of age, who worked in a Hosiery Mill and supported an invalid mother, and two infant sisters. He was injured by an automobile, but not a word of criticism or bitterness did he ever utter against the cruel man who had negligently injured him, and who never even offered to repair his bicycle.

The most lovable and conscientious judge, and who has a heart as big as a mountain, and who always endeavors to protect the weak and defenseless as against the strong, and who, when a helpless woman or child appears before him complaining of a wrong, acts both as judge and counsel, is Oscar Yarnell, our distinguished Circuit Judge.

One of the proudest moments of my law life was when I received a letter from the Honorable John H. Wigmore, noted text book writer and author, and Dean of the Law Department of Northwestern University, written at "The Hague," about my son and partner, Joe V. Jr., August 8, 1932, which is as follows:

"DEAR MR. WILLIAMS:

Just a line to say that I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of your son. He is a fine specimen of young America—one of the



## SOME OF MY PREFERENCES

finest that I have ever met. I was proud to see him representing our young Bar.

He will tell you all about our great Congress. There were over 300 delegates, of whom 70 were U.S.A.

Cordially yours,

(Signed) JOHN H. WIGMORE."

The most loyal and faithful stenographer-secretary, if not the best, I have ever known, is Mrs. May Dunbar Burelbach, who came to me in August, 1906, from the little mountain town of Crossville, recommended to me by my good friend Casto Smith. "Miss May," as she is lovingly known by the members of our family, and by the general public in Chattanooga, has been with me from 1906 to this date, with the exception of a period of three years when she "soldiered" with her husband, Major Burelbach, in the World War.

The most eloquent preacher I have ever heard was my father, and, strangest of all strange things, I never missed a single sermon he preached if it were possible for me to be present, and up until his death I contrived every imaginable excuse to be absent when others preached.

The most faithful animal friend I ever had was my little dog "Vic." In 1886, when we removed to Texas and were denied the privilege of taking her with us on the train, my heart was almost broken,



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

and “Vic” died in a few weeks grieving for her little master. I have always admired Senator George Vest, of Missouri, because of the beautiful tribute he paid to dogs.

## CHAPTER XIII

### PUBLICATIONS



ELIEVING it will be of some interest to my children, I shall mention some of my addresses and writings which may be found in print:

Memorial Resolutions adopted by the Chattanooga Bar for former Chief Justice D. L. Snodgrass, and published in 138 Tennessee Reports.

Address delivered before the Supreme Court of Tennessee in memorial services in honor of former Chief Justice D. L. Lansden, when a portrait of Judge Lansden was presented to the Court. Published in 150 Tennessee Reports.

Address delivered before the Supreme Court in memorial services in honor of General Frank M. Thompson, in 155 Tennessee Reports.

Address before the Supreme Court in honor of General L. D. Smith in 166 Tennessee Reports 705.

Both General Thompson and General Smith made enviable records as Attorneys-General of Tennessee.

In the Chattanooga Times of January 10, 1900, there was printed a large part of an address I made in defense of Julia Morrison, an actress, who shot her

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

leading man on the stage of the old Opera House in Chattanooga, located where the building of the Tennessee Electric Power Company now stands.

An address I delivered as Temporary Chairman of the Independent Judicial Convention at Nashville was published in the newspapers over the State May 10, 1910.

Also, my address as Temporary Chairman of the State Democratic Convention, at which Senator Robert Love Taylor was nominated for Governor, was published in the newspapers of the State October 7, 1910.

An address delivered on the life of Judge Charles D. Clark, January 3, 1916, when his picture was presented to the Federal Court and hung in the Federal Court room at Chattanooga. This was later printed in pamphlet form.

There was published in the Chattanooga Times of February 21, 1918, a part of my address in the prosecution of a well-known and wealthy Chattanooga on the charge of seduction. The jury returned a verdict for \$16,000. The young woman there involved came from a splendid Kentucky family. The last time I heard of her she was one of the secretaries in the office of the Postmaster-General during President Wilson's administration.

An address delivered at the annual Memorial exercises for the Confederate soldiers, at the Confeder-

## PUBLICATIONS

ate Cemetery at Chattanooga, and published in full in the Chattanooga Sunday Times, June 3, 1923.

I made many addresses in the campaign of 1928, in my support of Governor Alfred E. Smith, candidate for President and, one of these was published in the Chattanooga Times and the Nashville Banner of September 26, 1928. Accompanying the publication in the Banner its publisher, my long-time friend Major E. B. Stahlman, published an editorial of which the following is a part:

“The address by Mr. Williams, as broadcast from a Chattanooga station, is published elsewhere in this issue of the Banner. It is given space because of its worth. No better speech has been made by any Tennessean in this campaign. Mr. Williams is a lawyer of great ability. He reasons logically and delivers himself eloquently. After so notable a deliverance it should come to the attention of the National Democratic Committee that here in Tennessee is a speaker more than worth while, and he should be sent beyond the limits of his own State to evangelize for the Democratic candidate.”

In the Chattanooga Times of October 25, 1936, there was published in the magazine section an article by Miss Zella Armstrong, distinguished genealogist and Historian for Hamilton County, in relation to the author.

When an effort was made by the President to



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

“pack” the Supreme Court, in 1937, I made a number of addresses against such effort. And to stir the interest of our people wrote and had friends write numerous letters to Senators and Congressmen. At the request of the Chattanooga Times, former Solicitor General Frierson and myself debated the question, and our articles were published in the magazine section of the Chattanooga Times March 7, 1937.

## CHAPTER XIV

### LOOKING DOWN MEMORY'S LANES

#### COUNTRY DOCTORS



ALL my early homes were seemingly far away from our family physician. These benefactors of humanity were as essential as any necessity of life to the rural family, and the world owes to them a debt that can never be paid. Drug stores, nurses, ambulances, telephones and hospitals were unknown to the communities of the mountain people in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century. A call for these country doctors had to be made by one on horse back who was compelled to ride over rough, unpaved roads and in rainy weather a rider did well if he were able to reach a doctor's home in two or three hours, and so it was even in emergencies a physician's services in ordinary cases could not be had in less than four or five hours. A country doctor carried his medicines on all his visits, and when one was called he very likely had had no experience in surgery except, if he could correctly guess that there was a fracture of a bone, he knew how to use boards for a splint, bring

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

the bones together and leave nature to do the rest.

At Cumberland Institute, our family physician, Dr. Sullivan, lived eight miles away. Born in Dublin, Ireland, he emigrated to America just before the Civil War and like many of that heroic race he came south and enlisted in the Confederate Army. He was a dear soul, his very presence giving assurance of his power to heal.

When I was 13 one morning at breakfast a chicken bone lodged in my throat. It refused to either go down or come up and a rider on horse was dispatched for the doctor. It took hours for one to ride 16 miles and I recall how anxiously I sat at the window waiting for the coming of the doctor. Napoleon at Waterloo never scanned the horizon wishing for the coming of Grouchy more than I did for Dr. Sullivan on that morning. Finally, as the clock showed almost the noon hour, I saw him turning in at our front gate. I had all that morning wondered how he would dig that chicken bone out of my throat, and just as he was arriving I struggled hard to stir the bone from the place where it was resting by forcing a cough that shook my whole diaphragm and lo and behold the bone was loosened and I spat it out just as the doctor was entering the room!

The mountain people then and now know how to appreciate a country doctor, a type now almost extinct. These benefactors of the human race used

## LOOKING DOWN MEMORY'S LANES

little medicine, the chief one being castor oil. A dose of that served to cure all ills but its efficacy lay chiefly in the fact a youngster, after taking one dose, soon showed signs of restoration to robust health for fear another dose would bring more agony.

### TRIAL OF A NEW INVENTION

Speaking of castor oil, I am reminded that one day in 1917, while in the store of our druggist at Chattanooga, I was shown a new way to take castor oil, advertised as perfectly tasteless. The new plan was that the oil was enclosed in gelatin capsules and all that was necessary to have the benefit of this ancient life-saver was to place the capsule in the mouth and swallow it. Nothing was said about taking a little water to encourage the capsule to travel down the esophagus.

I immediately bought a package, and in the evening called my children around me to unfold this remarkable discovery. I explained to them, as it had been explained to me, how easy it was to take castor oil, which had been their dread as it had been their father's. In unison they suggested that their Dad make an ocular demonstration of the ease with which these capsules, about the size of a bird egg, could be swallowed. This seemed fair and reasonable, and so I placed one in my mouth and tried to swallow, but to save my life I could not get it down. Meanwhile,



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

the gelatin coating had dissolved, and the only way I could get the oil down was to drink about three glasses of water. The demonstration was to the entire satisfaction of my audience, and the laughter and joy which greeted my discomfiture convinced me that the invention had little if any virtue. Thereafter we had to resort to efforts of persuasion, hire, and sometimes threats of a hickory switch if our children were to have the benefits of castor oil.

### SOME NECESSITIES IN ALL HOMES

At the homes of both my grandparents were looms and spinning wheels, both of which were in active use in making cloth for garments to be worn by members of the family.

At grandfather Williams' was also a full set of shoemaker's tools, and I began to use the tools at first to pass the time away, and later to satisfy my actual needs. I became a pretty fair shoe cobbler. Near our home were two old-time boot makers, who made boots at a cost of \$5. per pair. These boots, if kept half-soled, would last two winters or more. The boys of the community however usually wore brogans in winter where their families were unable to purchase boots from the stores at Sparta. The latter always had "red tops" and a boy who could boast such a luxury was considered very lucky. To prevent the snow and rain from soaking through

## LOOKING DOWN MEMORY'S LANES

the leather, tallow was rubbed on the shoes every night.

Wristlets knitted of yarn were worn in winter to keep the cold from the wrists. Big snows were common in those days, and I cannot recall a single winter prior to 1886 when we failed to have ponds covered with ice on which we skated for weeks.

People were more sociable then than they are now. Boys visited the homes of other neighbor boys, not just occasionally but very often. Staying all night with friends was common, and on these visits the telling of stories went on far into the night. Occasionally a former Civil War veteran would spend the evening or night at our home, and would regale us with his war experiences. As a child I would sit entranced during these visits. Those were glorious and happy days, and quite different from the present times and customs.

## CHAPTER XV

### SOME OF MY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES



LAWYER'S life is not confined altogether to dry, abstract legal propositions, as the ordinary layman would imagine. In my practice I have observed many events that had a tinge of romance and some that called for the skill of a Sherlock Holmes in working out a solution. A professional man also meets up with his part of the world's surprises.

#### UNEXPECTEDLY EMPLOYED

One of the first cases I had came in a strange way. To me it was a big case. My employment came about on receipt of a telegram in 1898 from a frantic Philadelphia mother. At that time there were 62,000 soldiers quartered at Fort Oglethorpe preparing for the Spanish War. Gen. Wm. S. Shafter was in charge, a 300 pounder who, it was said, used a ladder to mount his horse.

This telegram was addressed to Joshuway Williams, and why the telegram was delivered to me I have never known. In 1898 there was only one other lawyer by the name of Williams in Chattanooga, and



## SOME OF MY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

that was Robert H. Williams, then and now one of the leaders of our bar.

I took the telegram to my friend, Judge C. D. Clark, and asked his advice. He told me to wire the mother and accept employment, have her wire my compensation and expenses, and go out and see the boy, ascertain the facts and at once prepare a petition for writ of habeas corpus. I followed his instructions and what looked to me like a big fee (\$350.) and expenses was wired to me in a few hours.

Judge Clark wrote for me a letter of introduction to U. S. District Judge Wm. T. Newman, at Atlanta. The latter, before the Civil War, practiced law at Chattanooga and enlisted in Company A, Fourth Tennessee Cavalry recruited here. Armed with the petition and this letter of introduction I caught the afternoon train for Atlanta. At eight o'clock that evening I was sitting in Judge Newman's home and in a few minutes had my writ duly signed. Judge Newman and family were to leave Atlanta the next morning to go to their summer home at Hendersonville, N. C., and many of his social friends were calling that night to wish him and his family a pleasant stay at their summer home.

He insisted that I stay, and this I did. I stood in the receiving line and met all his guests. After that I never failed to call on Judge Newman when in Atlanta. He had served the South as one of its



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

soldiers and in retreating with his brigade in North Carolina, just before the Civil War closed, lost an arm.

At eleven o'clock next day I was ushered into the tent of Gen. Shafter. I showed him the writ and he flew into a rage and cursed "these damned shyster lawyers" who would wreck the army, and when my client, a fine, clean looking youngster, was brought in, all the words in the dictionary of blasphemy were hurled at the kid, and among others, said the pompous General; "If I had the power I would strip you naked and shave your ——— head and give you a kick."

Of course, I sat silent and so was the boy. If he were about to ascend the scaffold to be hung he could not have looked more scared. We left the great general's headquarters as quickly as we could and came to Chattanooga.

In my youth I had heard of Gen. Shafter who had presided over a military trial of Champe Ferguson, a Confederate home guard. He was buried near my home in White County. He was convicted and hung at Nashville in the early days of Reconstruction, and when asked just before the rope was cut if he had anything to say, he replied: "Give my remains to my wife who is here today so I can be buried in the sacred soil of White County."

Both the Williams and the Wallace families felt

## SOME OF MY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

kindly towards Ferguson because he had protected the people of that section against the Federal home guards. All the time Gen. Shafter was hurling his anathemas at my kid client and myself, I wanted to tell him just what I was then thinking, that is, that Champe Ferguson had been tricked into his surrender by Col. Blackburn, with the assurance he would receive amnesty if he would surrender and take the oath of allegiance, but in violation of this promise he was arrested, tried and convicted for an act committed during the War period at Wytheville, Va.

## MARITAL ENTANGLEMENTS

Years ago the master mechanic of a railroad at Louisville, Kentucky, became tired of his wife and abandoned her and their children and came to Chattanooga. In a few years he had a responsible position with a local railroad and being of a frugal nature, had accumulated some property. He took up with another man's wife and married her. He kept his whereabouts a secret from his family and although he received a substantial salary he gave no part of it to his wife and children at Louisville. A few years later he died and these facts in some way reached his Kentucky family. I was employed to represent them in an effort to get at least a part of his estate.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

It at once developed that if he were legally married to the Chattanooga woman, she would inherit his estate and by legal marriage, I mean that the marriage would have been legal in so far as she was concerned, provided she was innocent of any wrong and had no knowledge of his previous marriage. In my investigation, I learned this woman had been married to a man by the name of Tallent, who had served in the Spanish-American War. I could not find where any divorce had been granted this couple nor did his people know whether he was dead or alive. His wife had given her deposition in which she stated Tallent had died several years previous to her second marriage.

For two years I continued to try to find something of Tallent. Among other things I did was to write the Pension Department at Washington to see if the fellow had applied for a pension, and the reply in all instances was that no application had been made. I so advised my clients and further advised that our case looked hopeless. But I had not given up and when I was in Washington a few months afterwards I happened to walk down the street on which the Pension building was located. Remembering that I had never found Tallent, I walked into the building to the desk of the Chief Clerk and introduced myself. He was at the time reading a letter and the letter was from Tallent. I procured his address and



## SOME OF MY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

learned he had never been divorced but had all the years of his separation from his wife been in correspondence with her. His deposition was taken and the fraud of his wife was uncovered and my client was decreed the property her husband had left at his death.

### ATTEMPTS TO BLACKMAIL

I have believed that blackmailers thrive because of the timidity of the victims in their fear of an exposure. It has seemed to me that members of the public who are threatened by this specie of criminal owe it to society to refuse to make payment and expose those who attempt it.

Several such cases have come my way, as an attorney, but I shall mention only two where clients took my advice and not a cent was paid.

The first was soon after I came to Chattanooga, when a young traveling salesman, who had formerly lived at Sparta, came breathlessly into my office one Monday morning and stated he had been arrested on the Sunday afternoon previous, in a situation where it would be embarrassing to his companion and, of course, to himself. The officer had arrested both the young man and the young woman without warrant and allowed them to go without bond, but directed them to appear at the office of Esq. Thomas Cowart on the following morning at ten o'clock. During



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

this period the officer took the young man aside and told him if he could dig up \$250. by the next morning the matter would be hushed up. I was then sharing office with Mr. T. C. Latimore, who had had some experience in dealing with this type of criminal, and he offered his advice to the effect that the victim send the officer to our office, which was promptly done. Mr. Latimore repeated what the defendant had stated and told the officer he would give him five minutes to bring the warrant up and destroy it or he would go down and have a warrant sworn out for the officer for official oppression. The officer did not deny the accusation, was seemingly very happy to have the affair ended, and it did not take him more than two minutes to get back with the warrant and tear it up, and thus ended the case.

In 1910, a client of considerable wealth in a nearby city gave me this story: His daughter had married a young fellow of respectable family. They lived together a year or so and by mutual agreement separated, and the daughter went to one of the western states where she resided with some of her relatives, and while there obtained a divorce from this first husband and remarried. The first husband, on learning of this, wrote the father of his former wife that his daughter had necessarily committed perjury in obtaining the divorce and that he was going to the place where she was in the west and

## SOME OF MY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

have her indicted for perjury, provided the father would not give up \$5000. This demand had been made in a letter that went through the United States mails and hence was very easily handled in that this was a clear violation of the postal regulations. All I had to do was to write the former husband and quote him the Federal Statutes and suggest if he did not want to go to the penitentiary for a period of at least three to five years, that he had better advise with some competent and honest lawyer. I assume he did so, because he was never heard from anymore.

### CHASING A DEAD SOLDIER'S FORTUNE

A few years after I came to Chattanooga some Middle Tennessee friends advised an elderly lady then residing in Chattanooga to call and see me. She had come here from that section. She called and showed me a telegram from the Superintendent of the Government Hospital at Washington, D. C., advising that her brother, who had enlisted in the U. S. Army in 1869, and who had reenlisted from time to time until 1895, had died. The soldier had never gotten above the rank of a private. His first enlistment papers were signed by Gen. Geo. A. Custer, who with his regiment, was trapped and killed by the Indians in 1876.

The lady told me her soldier-brother had visited her a few years before he died and carried a roll of

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

money. We wired the Hospital Superintendent to see if the soldier's personal effects contained any reference to money. We received a reply that he had on his person \$1.66, and three pocket knives and that his trunk had been examined and nothing was found showing he had any cash or any deposit in a bank.

We then had the old trunk brought to Chattanooga, and the only thing we found of seeming importance was a card giving the name of the cashier of a bank at Savannah, Georgia, near where at one time this soldier's regiment had been quartered. We had the lady's son appointed administrator and wrote this Bank to see if this bank had any fund due the deceased and promptly we received a reply it had on deposit \$7500. in the name of our man.

The sister insisted her brother carried on his person on his visit to her more than \$7500. Believing this to be true, I prepared and mailed letters to every bank from Maryland to Florida for a distance of 100 miles from the coast. We believed this would include every point where the soldier had been stationed after service in the west from 1869 to 1894. These letters brought replies as result of which we recovered \$6000. more.

Among other replies was one from an official of the Washington Trust Company, who stated because he



## SOME OF MY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

had been born and reared in Tennessee near where the soldier was living in 1869, when he first enlisted, that he had personally examined records of the Washington Trust Company but that no trace of any funds in the name of the soldier could be found on the books of his bank.

A few weeks later the son of the lady came to my office with two small cheap note books issued as an advertising medium by a patent medicine company, and stated these had been found in the old man's trunk. Some leaves in one of these note books had been pasted together at both ends and on the sides, and on tearing the leaves apart we found a \$2500. certificate of deposit issued by the Washington Trust Company and another certificate for a smaller amount on another bank. Both were promptly paid, my Washington friend was not to blame for his error because he had looked at the checking accounts and not for accounts showing certificates of deposit.

That experience and others of a similar nature taught me that a lawyer ought never to give up if he is chasing a treasure-trove and "the thing is hot." I may add that this family has the five different enlistment papers of this soldier and marked thereon when he was discharged are the words "Excellent Character," and each carrying his receipt for several hundred dollars, thus showing he had allowed his

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

small compensation to accumulate. I am sure he never wrote or cashed a check on any of his sundry deposits.

A few years after the above incident occurred, I was employed in a will case in an adjoining state where the issue turned on whether a legatee was the real granddaughter of the testatrix. My associates and I had information that the child's mother was never married but the only way to determine the question was to find the physician who had officiated at the birth of the girl. I prepared about 750 letters to physicians in a western state where we thought the child was born.

Numerous replies came back and among these was from a physician who had so officiated, but he asked that his name not be used. It was never disclosed, but the will contest was abandoned, and the misstep of the young girl has never been disclosed to the world.

From my experiences, I have concluded that many professional men fail because they give up too readily. Hard and constant work usually brings rewards, and if a young fellow thinks he can succeed without hard work, he will find when it is too late that he was mistaken.

## CHAPTER XVI

### MY LAST VISIT TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE



IN MY more than forty years of residence in Chattanooga, I have from time to time gone back on brief visits to Zion and Cumberland Institute, and to the places in Hickory Valley where my parents were born and reared. And, likewise, every few years I have visited the place where we lived in Texas and where my father is resting.

I suppose as the "sere and yellow leaf" period of life nears all human beings indulge in the same pleasures. In August, 1936, I made my usual trip to the scenes where I had lived in White County, and among other places I visited was Cumberland Institute on the Hill. My childhood friend, Tom Lee, was with me and we spent the day in visiting old friends and in recalling those things dear to our memories.

We left our car at the William Lee home which is in the valley, about one mile from the Hill and from that point we walked up the mountain to my former home.

When we reached the foot of the mountain, we



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

found the “sugar maple trees”—some three to four feet in diameter—had disappeared and not one was to be seen. There were more than a score of these trees and one year while we were residing at the Hill, brother and I “tapped” them and made maple sugar. This forest was owned by Mrs. Caroline Burgess, who had for years made maple sugar, and this point at such time was a popular place for the young people to gather.

We found the path up the mountain which the students and those who lived on top of the mountain used had also disappeared.

The vats of the old tannery near my old home had been filled with earth. The shading chestnuts had long since died of blight, the cherry and plum trees and grape arbor had been cut down and but a few of the apple trees, standing as if they were sentinels to tell the traveler that civilization once flourished here, still lived but they, too, will soon pass on. The great ash, hickory and gum trees around our home under which I had romped and played had been removed and every structure had either been torn or rotted down, and the only thing that was there in the eighties that remained was the old spring. Its cold clear water still flowed from under a cleft of rock but, alas, seemingly, no one now passes its way to quench his thirst.

We found even the road, rough as it always was,

## MY LAST VISIT TO CUMBERLAND INSTITUTE

that once connected with this place had been changed and run lower down on the side of the mountain as if it wanted to shun this spot. The scene that greeted us on every hand was one of stillness and desolation and quite different from what it was when I was a child.

The miracle of time plays havoc with things dear to man as if to show that physical objects like paths, roads, trees, orchards and play grounds are by man discarded and they, too, pass into oblivion.

Tom and I sat down on the rim of the mountain and recalled the pleasant times we had there in the long ago, of those who had sought this place to prepare to meet the problems of life and how mirth and good fellowship once here abounded.

Yes, there was one other thing still there and that was the beautiful valley scene that spread out before us. Nature below had retained its original beauty. Cherry Creek was still rolling on and its border of green was as vivid as ever, and, too, the homes of the contented people who lived in this pastoral scene more than half a century ago were still visible to us. But most of those we had known had passed on or removed away.

This hour of reminiscence between two men who as boys had played around these hills and in the valley below brought no cheer but rather feelings of sadness and as we prepared to take our leave, I thought

JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

of the poem of the English poet Lord Byron, who,  
too, wrote of "The Hill" of his youth:

Adieu, thou Hill, where early joy  
Spread roses o'er my brow;  
Where Science sought each loitering boy  
With Knowledge to endow

Adieu, my youthful friends or foes  
Partners of former bliss or woes;  
No more through thy paths we stray  
But must remain unconscious of the day.



## CHAPTER XVII

### MY RELIGION



I AM a fundamentalist; no allurements for knowledge that some scientists teach has caused me to read a single line or sentence that would shake my faith that there is a God who reigns supreme. If this belief, as taught by those who disbelieve, be false, there is nothing lost.

My religion taught me to be tolerant to those who have different views, and that creeds mean nothing.

My religion taught me to be unselfish, not to cheat, and that I am "my brother's keeper."

I believe as my parents believed, and before I was born the Christian Religion gave to them ideals of life that caused them to make my home a place of beauty and culture and in my helpless infancy to have me baptized in Jesus' name.

Listening to my father's sermons and observing his daily life enriched my childhood with the romance of religion, and taught me the lessons of life that became a part of my soul.

In the stress and storm of life, recollection of the teachings of my parents, and their gentle, serene lives, have guided my footsteps upwards, and when

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

I faltered and suffered the bitterness of sin, those teachings have served to woo me back to the path of righteousness, with firmer resolve to lead a better life.

When our children came to bless our home I tried to transmit to them by example those noble teachings I had during my youth, and as I have watched over them, as the years have come and gone, I am happy to say that each of them has developed and lived those ideals dearest to my heart—humility, unselfishness and tolerance.

## APPENDIX



IN THE following pages there are published excerpts from a Commencement Address delivered June 2, 1925, at the closing of the Webb School, of Bellbuckle, Tennessee, and also the Chronology of Francis Williams and his Descendants, and Chronology of Elias Wallace and his Descendants.

There is little new thought in this address, and I may add the stories therein related have oft-times been published and are generally known to the public. These stories, however, embody a philosophy of life that is dear to me, and they are here published in the address to follow largely because my son Joe Jr., who was one of the graduates at that time, has urged me to do so.

May I also add that the founder of Webb School, the late Senator Sawney Webb, did as much or more than any other single person since the Civil War in educating the boys of the South and in teaching them high ideals and inspiring them to be worthy of their heritage. He died December 19, 1926.

"Give my boys my love," was the last message of this great teacher, "and tell them to lead a large life. A large life is not a life that's a mere piffle, but one that makes the world a better place because you have lived."

THE AUTHOR



EXCERPTS FROM COMMENCEMENT  
ADDRESS DELIVERED BY  
JOSEPH VINCENT WILLIAMS  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH  
ANNIVERSARY OF WEBB SCHOOL,  
BELLBUCKLE, TENNESSEE, JUNE 2, 1925



THE day has long since passed when it is necessary to argue the necessity of an education. I cannot resist, however, repeating what Henry Ward Beecher said; that "an uneducated man is like undug ore. Iron in the ground is nothing, but when we have taken it out, smelted and purified it, and it has been made into utensils and machinery, then the mineral has been educated and it becomes valuable."

And this great orator also said: "A man is but a mine of undug faculties. When born he is like an acorn, but in an acorn—that is—in its potential future, there is timber. In a bushel of acorns are ships, dwellings, carved cornices and beautiful structures. And when men are born they are born into orators, into statesmen, into business men—provided, after being born, they are planted and developed and given an opportunity to grow as God intended when he created them."

This idea of development is lodged in every man so he can stand alone; it is the foundation of self-government—the only divine government in this world.

## APPENDIX

### WHY THIS TOIL?

Sometimes the student, weary from overwork, sitting secluded in his room, is tempted to ask, "Why all this work and toil?"

My answer is that if you want to be a full, rounded, well-developed person, you must have a good education; without it there is something lacking.

It seems to me the age in which we live demands a higher education than at any time in the history of the world. We want to run with the swiftest and best, and rivalry and ambition, if nothing more, will demand that we be placed upon equal footing with our adversaries.

I am not one who urges that an education can come alone from a course in school or college. It may come in the field; as the man walks to and fro in his daily work; in the workshop as he performs his daily duties, or in nightly meditation when others have given themselves up to inglorious repose. It may come to those who at school had neglected their opportunities, but who, on discovering their failures, may even in middle life go to work with redoubled energy and soon repair their errors.

It is clear to me that the conduct of life is a separate science by itself, and the most important of all sciences. Unless you commence now both a study and a practice of your conduct, I fear your learning will be of no avail. It not only embraces all your other sciences but it includes also the whole circle of human virtues, and if you fail to live and practice good conduct you will probably fail in all other efforts.

Some will say that you must know the world. Yes, this is true, unless you are to be helpless all your lives you must acquire some of this knowledge. But never suppose that

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

“knowledge of the world” consists chiefly of knowledge of evil. The deepest knowledge of human nature has for its guiding light the desire to discover that which is best in humanity.

Do not waste your life in analyzing the polutions of the social atmosphere, but bring into it the breath of a purer spirit.

Hard as it may be to reform and quit a bad habit, it is still harder to conceal a bad habit when once formed.

When a boy who has strayed from the path of rectitude undertakes to face about and reform he may find the tide is against him. People soon lose faith in him, and he loses faith in himself and these two conditions point the way to early destruction. It is not only that he has formed bad habits, but these habits get the mastery over him, and usually sap away his strength and powers of self-control.

### DO NOT WAIT UNTIL OLD AGE

Do not wait until old age creeps upon you to undertake to do big things. Youth is the time to start doing things. Napoleon, when ten years old, wrote from school to his mother that with his Homer and his sword by his side he could fight through the world. Michael Angelo, the great Italian Master, when a mere lad in school, covered the walls of his room with sketches and pictures. Galileo, when eighteen, discovered the principles of the pendulum.

But if youth has passed, don't get discouraged because you didn't succeed earlier. Barnum failed in fourteen different callings before he came to be the master showman of all the world. Goldsmith failed as a physician and then became a poet and wrote “The Deserted Village,” which made him famous. Phillip Brooks was a failure before he finally



## APPENDIX

studied for the ministry and became a great and renowned preacher in New England. Grant, at thirty-five, was a tanner in Galena, Illinois. D. L. Moody, the great evangelist, at twenty-five was a shoe clerk.

Don't imagine, however, you can win success in life by one leap, or that you can conquer the world by one stroke. It is said Thomas Gray, the great Irish poet, spent fifteen years writing the poem "Elegy in a Country Church Yard."

### FAILURE OF LIFE

The crisis of the battle of life, that is, the brunt of it, is fought when a man is very young. The probability is that with most of you it will be fought and won or lost in a very few years.

To us in advanced years things have a meaning which they can never have to one of your age. I doubt if a single one of you has ever had anything like a realization of the expression so commonly heard, "a failure in life."

My pursuit in life has brought me in contact with many men who have failed, and yet I have not seen the worst because I have seen little of the criminal classes. But I have seen enough to enable me to say that if young men of your ages could only have a slight conception of what is meant by "a failure in life," such a person would almost be unknown.

If you could only know the heartache, the sense of humiliation, the sleepless nights that stamp themselves on the face and that whiten the hair of one who has been "a failure," I am sure you would do everything within your power to avoid such disaster.

The thing above all others that should impel you to try to avoid such an ending is that others may suffer as much

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

or more than yourself. If a man could suffer alone it would not be so disastrous, but generally when a man goes down in the world he carries others with him—his father, who toiled that his son might rise; his mother, who put her feet in the very waters of death that he might be born into the world; his wife, who had willingly trusted her life to his keeping; his innocent children who look to him for help and protection. All these, in spirit if not actually, go with him upon the rocks of failure and disaster.

The great Shakespeare never sounded the wail of a human wreck more truly and wonderfully than when he made one of his famous characters to exclaim:

“My way of life is fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf, and that which should accompany old age, as honor, love, obedience, troops of friends, I must not look to have, but in their stead curses, not loud, but deep, mouth honor, breath which the poor heart would fain deny and dare not.”

### POVERTY NOT AN OBSTACLE

I have not a personal acquaintance with many of you today, but I can hear some of you say, as I have heard others, “I have no wealth, no influential friends or relatives, and there is a great shadow—the shadow of poverty—that lies in my path and I cannot see how it can be lifted.”

The poor boy's chance depends, as it has always, on what the poor boy has to sell. If his stock in trade consists of undeveloped muscle, a dull brain, and a sullen discontent he will work for wages the balance of his days, and the only thrill that will ever come to him will be when he hears the Noon-day or the closing whistle, and he will likely as not die a mendicant. But if he have the courage and grit, and

## APPENDIX

the will to do or die in the effort, he can accomplish much.

This at least is true: Fifty years from today the President of this Republic, a majority of the senators, congressmen, governors, statesmen, ministers, educators, authors, poets, philosophers, inventors and men of affairs will be men all of whom are now your age; most of them poor and obscure and now fighting against obstacles that look insurmountable to those who seek to enter at the gate that leads to fame and fortune.

It has been truly said that society is reinforced from the bottom, and not from the top. Families die, fortunes dissipate, but recruits come from the farm, from the hills and from the obscure places. I repeat, those who will soon be in control of this nation are boys who now wear hand-me-downs, and not the gilded youth clad in purple and fine linen.

This Republic offers, as it has ever offered, the poor boys opportunity, and the way is open to all who choose to walk its gilded halls. Your worst enemy, therefore, if you seem discouraged, is yourself.

## SLOGANS

America's Broncho Humorist, Will Rogers, recently published a satire on the habit of our people to conduct their businesses on slogans.

If you become discouraged, then read the history of the great men of the world who have, notwithstanding poverty, accomplished wonders, and if this fails to stir and enliven your ambition to overcome your seeming obstacles, then try, as Will Rogers suggested, to think of a slogan that will give you new hope.

Remember, it was John Adams who, in the struggle of the



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

Colonies, cried out, "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my heart and my vote to this Declaration of Independence."

That it was Patrick Henry, a compatriot, who electrified his countrymen when he said, "Give me liberty or give me death." That it was Benjamin Franklin, another patriot of that perilous time, who said, "We must all hang together or we will hang separately." That it was Nathan Hale, when he was about to die for his country, who said, "The only regret I have is that I have but one life to give for my country."

That it was Admiral Lawrence who in the War of 1812, roused his discouraged seamen to heights of bravery when, as he saw his lifeblood ebbing away, exclaimed: "Don't give up the ship!" That it was Andrew Jackson, as he faced the veteran victors of England in the battle of New Orleans, who encouraged his soldiers as he walked down the line, by crying out, "Steady, boys, don't shoot until you see the whites of their eyes."

And that it was General Bullard, an Alabamian at Chateau Thierry, in far away France, where the high tide of Prussian strategy ebbed back in a tumultuous surf of blood and flame, when directed by the French commanding officer to retreat, cried out, "Sir, American soldiers would not understand an order to retreat," and that he was going to charge the enemy.

"Rejoice, Oh, young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth."

Try your best to conquer all obstacles and make such obstacles incentives for your doing something big in life. Take as your motto the statement of Bulwer Lytton, who said, "In the lexicon of youth, which fate has reserved for a higher power, there is no such word as 'fail.'"

## APPENDIX

### COMMON VIRTUES

If a young man in the formation of his character learns the gift of self-mastery and cultivates the habits of honesty, good nature, temperance, industry and patient energy, he has already conquered the world. Without these every-day virtues he may fail beyond the darkest reckoning.

Perhaps Shakespeare understood better than any one else that we must be true to ourselves. He summed up this advice to youth when he said—

“Above all things, to thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.”

And again, when he said:

“Love thyself last; cherish these hearts that hate thee,  
Corruption wins not more than honesty  
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace  
To silence curious tongues, be just and fear not,  
Let all the ends thou aimst at be thy country’s,  
Thy God’s and truths.”

The struggles that are before you in this life depend upon yourselves rather than the outside world.

In our youth we are apt to believe that we must go to work to get friends and make money. But I know from an observation of many years that if you will be true to yourselves, and will do the work that is laid before you, diligently and faithfully, live honestly and deal kindly with your fellow man, avoiding all cant and hypocrisy, making sure always that your good qualities are genuine, friends and money will come in due time.

The only money which will ever do you any good is that

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

which comes honestly; and the only friends who will ever be of any use to you are those who come to you naturally.

### DEAL KINDLY WITH ALL

The world pays homage to a kind, gentle man. Men of violence and brutality may win for a day, but the victory will be an empty one.

I like to believe the most perfect man this continent has produced was a man whose heart was as gentle as a woman's, and that this element of his character obtained in his treatment of animals the same as it did with men. I refer to General Robert E. Lee, the South's great military Chieftain in the Civil War.

It is told of him that as he was riding with his staff over some part of the Gettysburg battlefield he saw a young Federal soldier who lay badly wounded. The soldier raised himself slowly on his elbow, lifted his cap and cried out, "Three cheers for President Lincoln!" On hearing the cry General Lee wheeled his horse, rode up to the soldier and dismounted. The soldier believed the General was offended, but instead he raised the head of the wounded man, changed his position and said, "My poor fellow, I hope you will now rest more comfortably."

Witness again this great man, while riding at the head of his army in Maryland: On seeing a little dog lying beside the road suffering from a wound wantonly inflicted, General Lee dismounted, gathered up the helpless animal in his arms and carried it to a nearby house where it could receive treatment.

If I were asked to name the one character in all history outside of Jesus himself whom I would want my children to study most and try to emulate, I should unhesitatingly name



## APPENDIX

Robert E. Lee. No cause is a "Lost Cause" which gives to the world such a type as he.

Read his life-story, my young friends; read the story that tells of his indictment for treason along with Jefferson Davis, President of the Southern Confederacy. That indictment was gotten up in such hot haste that it failed to embody a charge necessary to all indictments—that of an overt or known act. When this defect was discovered General Lee was temporarily released, and was taken before a Federal grand-jury in the City of Richmond. The irreconcilables of the North who were behind the prosecution believed General Lee, if asked whether President Davis had sponsored all the acts that had been committed by General Lee's army during the war would clear himself by answering in the affirmative. But they reckoned without knowing the true attributes of that great man. He promptly answered that whatever wrong, if any, had been committed by the armies of the South, he was responsible therefor.

Two years ago I stood with my two sons on the spot where General Pickett made his magnificent but futile charge on the field at Gettysburg, and recalled vividly the disaster history records that befell that heroic effort, and the fact that when General Pickett reported to his commanding general his noble division had been swept away General Lee replied: "It is all my fault, my general."

It requires a genuine man to acknowledge an error.

No wonder his mother paid to him the finest of all compliments when she said, "Robert was always good."

Tragedy indeed marked the end of his life. He died of a broken heart. He did not fall on the field of battle, in the hour of defeat or victory, but rather in silent grief for the

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

suffering which he could not relieve. There was something infinitely pathetic in the way he entered into the sorrow of a people and gave all his strength to those who had failed and who were downcast. This last view of General Lee as he passed out of sight is one of unspeakable sadness. The dignity was preserved, but it was the dignity of woe. That stately form, fit to wear the robes of a conqueror, bore sorrows not his own, and in this mournful majesty, silent with grief unspeakable, passed to the beyond.

The prototype of this great and enduring character was matched by the North in that fratricidal conflict in the character of Abraham Lincoln. The South has long since known that the assassin's bullet which ended Lincoln's life was an act which added to her woes in the years of Reconstruction.

I read this story some years ago:

Near the close of the Civil War a Federal Volunteer soldier, William Scott, a boy of nineteen, was found asleep one night while posted as sentinel. He was courtmartialed and sentenced to be shot. The day before the execution President Lincoln arrived at the prison where the boy was confined and went in to see him. On entering the prison Lincoln took his seat on a box by the prisoner and inquired of his home, his boyhood, his parents, and particularly his mother. The boy answered the questions as best he could, and drew from his blouse the picture of his mother and handed it to Lincoln, who saw reflected in its features a mother's sorrows and sacrifices and sufferings for her son.

"My boy," said the great President, "you are not going to be shot tomorrow. I believe you when you tell me that you could not keep awake. I am going to trust you and send

## APPENDIX

you back to your regiment, but I have been put to a great deal of trouble on your account. I have had to come here from Washington when I had much work to do. Now, what I want to know is, how are you going to pay my bill?"

It is said the boy was silent for a moment. His thoughts went back to his mother and the little farm. There was the steep hillside, the orchard, the horse, the cow and the sheep down by the meadow brook his bare feet had waded; the spring under the hill, the winding path to the back porch where hung the gourd, the rough towel and mother's kettle of soap. On and on swept memory, with a thousand sweet and sad recollections. He spoke slowly, at last, with a quiver upon his lips:

"I guess we could borrow some money by a mortgage on the farm."

He turned his head and mentally passing by the horse and cow, giving them a gentle stroke and calling each by name as he had often done, he continued:

"Then there is the bounty in the savings bank. My pay is something, and if you would wait until payday I am sure the boys would help so we could make it up if it isn't over five or six hundred dollars. I will write to mother tonight and she will have a part of it in a few days. She expects me to be shot tomorrow."

"But," said Lincoln, his voice clear and strong, and speaking now for his country, "my bill is more than that. It is indeed a large one. Your friends cannot pay it, nor the bounty, nor the farm, nor all your comrades. There is only one man in all this world who can pay it, and his name is William Scott. If from this day William Scott does his duty so that when he comes to die he can look me in the face as



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

he does now and say, 'I have kept my promise, I have done my duty as a soldier,' then my debt will be paid. Will you make me that promise and keep it?"

With tears streaming down his face the boy answered, "I'll try, sir."

Abraham Lincoln, though President of a great nation, and at a time when a mighty war was being fought, was not too big nor too busy to turn aside and save a poor, condemned boy. What a lesson for selfish men!

Today the world, the great pulsating world, which you sometimes fear is not interested in your future welfare, sitting in judgment says to you:

"You are indebted to me; you owe to your mother the right to a good and clean name; to society a pure and upright and helpful life; to your country the full measure of your devotion, and to your God a faithful obedience to His laws and commandments."

These debts the world holds cannot be paid by another; they are obligations personal to each of you.

### UNSELFISHNESS—SERVICE TO OTHERS

Life is a vain and empty thing unless it appreciates that others must also exist, and that existence is not alone for ourselves but for others.

If I were required to select but one of all the circle of virtues I would name the virtue of unselfishness because it covers and includes more than any other.

Unselfishness includes nearly all the good qualities of life—cleanliness, charity, sobriety, temperance, honesty.

A great Chicago divine, Dr. Gunsaulus, was sitting in his study one day, preparing a sermon for the coming Sunday

## APPENDIX

service on the text—*"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world."*

He had a nephew who lived with him. The boy came into the study, and looking over his uncle's shoulder saw the text which he read aloud. The boy had apparently lived a careless and indifferent life. He asked his uncle the meaning of the text, stating his fear that he did not know what purpose God had in his life. The great preacher explained the text to mean that God had created all things for a purpose, and, no doubt, the boy had been created by God for some high and noble purpose. The boy's attention was challenged by the suggestion, and he gave it much thought.

A few days later this same boy and a companion of about the same age were sitting in the Iroquois Theatre, in Chicago. This companion was of a frivolous nature; one who had never studied over the question as to what purpose he had been born into the world.

The place was thronged with people—wrinkled age, radiant youth, men and women of note—were there for the purpose of being entertained. Suddenly the cry of "Fire!" "Fire!" rang out through the audience. Pandemonium broke loose, and what had a few moments before been a happy, laughing crowd, soon became a fighting, struggling, frantic mob, seeking a place of safety.

The boy who had reasoned over the text of his uncle's sermon—"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world,"—became an instrument of God, and back and forth he went into the raging fire until he had carried seventeen children to safety. In his heroic efforts to go into the burning building once more he fell and became unconscious, and gave up his life that others might live.

His companion, he who had never paused and asked the

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

purpose of his life, cowardly ran to the door and to the street, making no effort to aid others who had been caught in that horrible catastrophe. His conscience lashed him for his cowardice and for his failure to give a helping hand to the helpless in that stricken audience. He dreamed at night, and shuddered by day over the awful scenes he had witnessed. He contrasted his conduct with that of his companion. The scorn of his friends was directed at him, and finally he fled to Europe to forget his experience. While in a café in Paris a few months later, in a drunken stupor, he committed suicide.

To what end were *you* born? And for what purpose are you here?

Your life must be an answer to these questions, and I beseech you to make such an answer as will bring to you honor and glory rather than shame and remorse.

### OPPORTUNITIES ALL ABOUT YOU

Now, some faint-hearted youth may ask, how can I succeed; how can I win the battle of life?

Let me reply that all you have to do to succeed and to win the goal is to do your simple duty. That has been the age-old formula, and that alone will bring victory. The opportunity is yours, and the field is open to all.

Senator John J. Ingalls, years ago, wrote a short poem called "Opportunity." It was a literary gem, and swept the intellectual world like a Kansas gale. It had the fault, however, of not correctly stating the true philosophy of life. It incorrectly stated that opportunity knocks but once at every door, and if answered not, returns no more.

I am glad that Walter Malone, a Tennessean, was inspired to write another poem, also called "Opportunity,"



## APPENDIX

correcting such impression, and stating that opportunity daily knocks at our door. This poem is to me an inspiration. I quote its first two stanzas:

“They do me wrong who say I come no more  
When once I knock and fail to find you in;  
For every day I stand outside your door  
And bid you wake, and rise to fight and win.

Wail not for precious chances past away;  
Weep not for golden ages on the wane;  
Each night I burn the records of the day—  
At sunrise every soul is born again.”

Yes, the opportunity is yours. It is all about you. Your parents have sacrificed that you might win; your teachers have labored that you might be fitted and equipped. It was theirs to build; remember always it is yours to maintain.

A deep and abiding love for your country, its ideals and institutions, its progress and betterment, its glory and achievements, will make you a better man, a better American, and a better Christian.

Our country deserves our warmest affection, our utmost devotion. She offers us opportunities no other can offer. We must not disappoint her in the service which she has a right to expect of us.

## CHRONOLOGY OF FRANCIS WILLIAMS AND HIS DESCENDANTS

Francis Williams, b. Jan., 1751, d. Mar. 1, 1833, m. Rebecca Trager in Baltimore, Maryland, Oct. 12, 1779. No record of dates of birth and death of Rebecca Trager.

*Issue:* (1) Mary, b. 1783, (m. Archibald O'Connor); (2) James, b. 1785, (m. Hannah Scoggins); (3) Sarah, b. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. Jonathan G. Haynes); (4) Francis, Jr., b. 1791, (m. \_\_\_\_\_).

James Williams, b. 1785, d. March 1, 1876, m. Hannah Scoggins in Washington or Carter County, Tenn., Jan. 22, 1805. No record of dates of birth and death of Hannah Scoggins. Came to White County in 1807.

*Issue:* (1) Jesse Scoggins, b. Jan. 1, 1821, (m. Elizabeth Whiteside Tate); (2) F. A., b. Sept. 1, 1829, (m. Talitha Smith); (3) David, b. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. Sarah T. Matlock); (4) Ben, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. 1835, never married; (5) Matthias, b. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. Lula McGhee); (6) Amarilla, b. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. \_\_\_\_\_ Arnold); (7) Minerva, b. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. \_\_\_\_\_ Arnold).

Jesse Scoggins Williams, b. Jan. 1, 1821, d. Dec. 14, 1883, m. Elizabeth Whiteside Tate in Hickory Valley, White County, Tennessee. She was b. Feb. 10, 1825, d. Jan. 9, 1882.

*Issue:* (1) Montgomery, b. Feb. 10, 1845, lived three years; (2) James Tate, b. March 28, 1847, (m. Matilda Wallace); (3) Sarah T., b. April 30, 1849, lived six years;

## APPENDIX

(4) Martha J., b. Oct. 5, 1851, lived 1 year; (5) Mary C., b. Nov. 29, 1853, (m. Robert G. Stewart) had one daughter, Maude E.; (6) Vincent B., b. March 10, 1856, lived three years; (7) Amarilla L., b. March 7, 1858, lived one year; (8) Elizabeth, b. July 18, 1860, (m. first J. L. Elder, m. second Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ Meadows) no children; (9) Josephine, b. April 21, 1863, (m. Wm. P. Glenn) no children; (10) Trent C., b. Jan. 5, 1866, lived 17 years.

James Tate Williams, b. March 28, 1847, d. Nov. 25, 1886, m. first, Matilda Wallace, Dec. 8, 1868. She was b. Oct. 30, 1852, d. Nov. 14, 1876.

*Issue:* (1) Alonzo, b. Sept. 21, 1869, d. Dec. 16, 1913; (2) Joseph Vincent, b. March 1, 1872, (m. Annie Margaret Scholze); (3) Adah Williams, b. March 8, 1874, d. July 9, 1874; (4) Lillie Matilda, b. Jan. 29, 1876, d. Jan. 10, 1896.

James Tate Williams, m. second, Jennie Shugart, Dec. 11, 1877. She was born Feb. 15, 1853, d. Oct. 24, 1925.

*Issue:* (1) Effie, b. Sept. 13, 1878, (m. Thomas H. Cantrell, Dec. 25, 1898) no children; (2) Jessie Ernest, b. May 28, 1880, d. May 8, 1882; (3) Mamie, b. March 7, 1882, d. Aug. 14, 1883; (4) Nannie, b. July 10, 1884, (m. Ed. H. Bullock, Jan. 1, 1907, and had children, Gladys, m., Bryan Hill, and James E.) Nannie died Sept. 11, 1926; (5) Jemmie May, b. Oct. 4, 1886, (m. James T. Quarles, Sept. 3, 1912).

Joseph Vincent Williams, b. March 1, 1872, m. Annie Margaret Scholze in Chattanooga, Tenn., Feb. 5, 1902. She was born Oct. 17, 1876.



## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

*Issue:* (1) Robert Scholze, b. Dec. 30, 1902, (m. Mary Louise Lawton; (2) Joseph Vincent, Jr., b. March 10, 1906; (3) Annie Gertrude, b. Sept. 4, 1910, (m. Charles Marion Gaston; (4) Margaret Elizabeth, b. July 17, 1914.

## CHRONOLOGY OF ELIAS WALLACE AND HIS DESCENDANTS

Elias Wallace, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. \_\_\_\_\_  
1821, m. Mary \_\_\_\_\_, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d.  
Nov., 1837.

*Issue:* (1) Stephen Wallace, b. 1785, d. Oct., 1859, (m. Susan York); (2) Laban, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. \_\_\_\_\_); (3) John (or Jack), b. 1795, d. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. first, \_\_\_\_\_, second, Dicey F. White); (4) Joseph, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. \_\_\_\_\_); (5) Arvilla, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. Pleasant Walker); (6) Sarah, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. Daniel Browning); (8) Jane, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. \_\_\_\_\_, (m. Wm. M. Bryan); (9) Mary, b. \_\_\_\_\_, d. \_\_\_\_\_, (unmarried).

Stephen Wallace, b. \_\_\_\_\_, 1785 in North Carolina, d. Oct. \_\_\_\_\_ 1859, m. Susan York. She was b. 1787 in North Carolina.

*Issue:* William Wallace, b. March 10, 1810 in Hickory Valley, d. \_\_\_\_\_ 1876, (m. Mahala Felton, b. Sept. 18, 1817 in Hickory Valley) daughter of John Felton and Rutha Doyle Felton.

*Issue:* (1) James L., b. April 18, 1836, d. Aug. 25, 1838; (2) Simon Doyle, b. Oct. 21, 1837, d. March 17, 1903, (m. Laura V. Stephens); (3) Eliza, b. Aug. 15, 1840, d. May 29, 1843; (4) Martha Jane, b. May 26, 1842, d. \_\_\_\_\_ 1899, (m. first, James Swafford, Nov. 4, 1858, second, W. D. Passons); (5) John Callie, b. Aug. 28, 1844, d.

## JAMES TATE WILLIAMS AND FAMILY

\_\_\_\_\_, 1931, (m. Sallie Lewis); (6) Stephen Monroe, b. Aug. 27, 1847, d. April 10, 1926, (m. first, Ida Franklin, second, Florence Goff); (7) Rutha, b. Nov. 13, 1840, resides at Rock Island, Tenn., (m. first, James Monroe Hill, Dec. 20, 1865, second, James William Scott, Sept. 8, 1878); (8) Joseph B., b. Oct. 29, 1850, d. May 29, 1867, never married; (9) Matilda, b. Oct. 30, 1852, d. Nov. 14, 1876, (m. James Tate Williams).













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